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THE MISSION OF THE COMFORTER,

AND OTHER SERMONS,

WITH NOTES.

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THE MISSION OF THE COMFORTER

Holy Spirit

AND OTHER SERMONS

WITH NOTES

BY JULIUS CHARLES HARE, M.A.

ARCHDEACON OF LEWES, RECTOR OF HERSTMONCEUX,
AND LATE FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE.

FIRST VOLUME:

THE SERMONS.

LONDON:
JOHN W. PARKER, WEST STRAND:
SOLD BY MACMILLAN, CAMBRIDGE.
1846.

Theology Library
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
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California

LONDON :
Printed by S. & J. Bentley, Wilson, and Fley,
Bangor House, Shoe Lane.

TO THE HONOURED MEMORY

OF SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE,

THE CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHER,

WHO THROUGH DARK AND WINDING PATHS OF SPECULATION

WAS LED TO THE LIGHT,

IN ORDER THAT OTHERS BY HIS GUIDANCE MIGHT REACH THAT LIGHT,

WITHOUT PASSING THROUGH THE DARKNESS,

THESE SERMONS ON THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT

ARE DEDICATED

WITH DEEP THANKFULNESS AND REVERENCE

BY ONE OF THE MANY PUPILS

WHOM HIS WRITINGS HAVE HELPT TO DISCERN

THE SACRED CONCORD AND UNITY

OF HUMAN AND DIVINE TRUTH.

PREFACE.

The five Sermons at the beginning of this volume on the Mission of the Comforter were preacht before the University of Cambridge in March 1840. My original intention was to point out, in the concluding Sermon, how the work of the Comforter in all its parts is fulfilled by His taking of the things of Christ, and shewing them to us. But to treat this subject adequately, it would have been requisite to shew how Christ, as God manifest in the flesh, and as the Reconciler of man to God, is, and ever has been, and ever must be, the one Principle and Source of all life and of all light, both collectively and individually, in His Church; and such a theme was far too vast for a single sermon. Indeed, beside the inexhaustible fulness of this truth, when contemplated in itself ideally, and in its relations to the fallen state of man, and to the history of the Church, the exposition of it would have led to a consideration of those false notions of Christ's personality, which regard Him as the mere Founder of a system, whether moral, or philosophical, or religious, and place Him at the head of it, but leave the system to work itself out through the impulse it

originally received. This would have superinduced an examination of the most recent form of Socinianism, the Straussian, which, after denying the Son and the Spirit, has ended by denying the Father also, and has rolled out of the chaos of Pantheism into the blank abyss of Atheism. To contend against and to exterminate this primary errour, under all its forms, by the assertion of the divine personality of Christ, of the redemption and reconciliation He has wrought for mankind, and of His abiding presence in His Church through the Spirit glorifying Him, and to establish these primary truths on irrefragable grounds, philological, historical, and philosophical, as well as theological, is the great work of our age: and all who are striving for the truth are bringing their contributions of one kind or other for the erection of this heavenly temple. It would be a blessed reward if anything in these volumes may in any way forward the carrying on of this work.

The other Sermons, which follow those on the Mission of the Comforter, were preacht on various public occasions, but seemed not illsuited for a place in the same Volume, their object being to set forth some part or other of the character and office of the Church,—her destination to be the Light of the World, her Unity, her educational and missionary charge, and that which is to be the outward fulfilment and manifestation of Christ's redemption, and of the indwelling of the Spirit, the walk of good works.

To these Sermons, mainly to those on the work of the Comforter, I have appended a body of Notes, which has swelled out far beyond my expectation. Several questions

of theological and ethical interest having been toucht on in the Sermons, as alone they could be there, cursorily and generally, I wisht to support the opinions exprest by more definite arguments and by the authority of wiser men. As there is so much difficulty and obscurity in the brief pregnant verses, in which our Lord declares the threefold work of the Comforter, I thought it might be useful to give a sketch of the manner in which those verses have been interpreted by the chief divines in the various ages of the Church, and that, if this sketch were illustrated by extracts from those divines, it might aid the theological student in forming an estimate of the kind of light he is to expect from the principal periods in the history of theology. For while the revived study of the theology of earlier ages, if carried on critically, with a discernment of that which each age had to effect toward the progressive unfolding of the truth, in its world-embracing highth and depth and breadth and fulness, cannot be otherwise than beneficial; on the other hand, if, as we have seen happen in several instances, the end of this study is merely to make us repeat by rote what was said in the fourth century, or in the fourteenth, instead of becoming wiser, we shall become foolisher. Even the swallow's twitter and the sparrow's chirp are pleasanter than the finest notes of the mocking-bird. So the merest truisms of our own age are better than the truths of former ages, unless these have been duly appropriated and assimilated to the body of our thoughts. Our intellectual food also, if it is to nourish and strengthen us, must be thoroughly digested. They

who complain of this, and call it presumption if we exercise our understandings on the lessons handed down to us, and do not receive them implicitly in reliance on the wisdom of our teachers, might as reasonably call it presumption in us that we do not swallow our food, without allowing our audacious teeth to masticate it, and our gastric processes to separate the nutritive part from the excremental. For such an unseasonable spurious humility there is but one natural home. They who swallow the theology either of the Fathers, or of the middle ages, in the gross, find themselves out of place in a Protestant Church; and while they wish to revive the Church of the middle ages, and confound faith with credulity, they are just fitted for the surrender of their reason and conscience to the arbitrary mandates of the Papacy.

In the course of the Notes several occasions presented themselves for speaking on questions which have been agitated in the controversies of the day; nor have I shunned them. Above all I have felt it an especial duty to call the attention of my readers again and again to the inestimable blessings of the Reformation, as evinced in the expansion of theology, no less than in the purification of religion. There are times indeed when one may be willing to throw a veil over the faults and sins of another Church; even as in the ordinary intercourse of life one is willing, in the hope of better things, to overlook much that may have been very reprehensible in a neighbour. But if the neighbour challenges scrutiny, if he reviles his betters, if he inveigles others to join him in reviling them, he must bear the penalty which he draws down on his own head. In

like manner, now that the battle of the Reformation is renewed, now that the Reformers are attackt with unscrupulous ignorance and virulence, now that the principles which animated them are impugned and denied, now that the whole course of events previously and subsequently, as well as at the time, is strangely misrepresented and distorted, it becomes necessary to defend the truth, not only by asserting its majesty and repelling its foes, but also by carrying the war into the enemy's country. If it be put as a question still hanging on the balance, whether our Church is a true Church, or whether the Church of Rome is the only true one, we must not allow false charity to deter us from bringing forward the marks which prove the Church of Rome to be in so many of its features utterly antichristian. For the same reason I have devoted one Note (W), of inordinate bulk, to the pleasanter task of vindicating Luther from a number of misrepresentations and calumnies, with which he has recently been assailed.

Here it is right to state that the observations on the development of Christian doctrine in Note G were printed long before the publication of Mr Newman's last work. Their purpose was to help the reader in forming a correct notion on a subject, on which, it seemed to me, very erroneous opinions had been promulgated in Mr Newman's Sermon before the University of Oxford, and in the writings of some of his followers, opinions caught up somewhat hastily and superficially from certain German Romanists, without a clear perception either of their grounds or their tendencies, or even of the truth they involved; while the extraordinary inferences drawn from them made the

very word *development* a byword of alarm with the opposite party. To Mr Newman's recent work I have purposely avoided all reference, lest I should be entangled in an argument which would increase the size of these overgrown volumes. Other occasions for speaking of it will arise ere long, if indeed there be any necessity of adding to what has already been said by my brother-in-law Mr Maurice in the Preface to his Warburtonian Lectures, and by Professor Butler in the excellent series of Letters which he has inserted in the Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette.

Another object which I have kept in view more or less, while collecting the materials for the Notes, has been to furnish the theological student with a few hints or guideposts, so to say, when he enters into the region of German theology; which many are wont to regard as a vast wilderness peopled with "Gorgons and Hydras and Chimeras dire." That the views conveyed in Mr Rose's denunciation were utterly erroneous, we were taught in some measure by Dr Pusey in his answers, the most valuable theologically of his writings. Ignorance however has not been silenced, and, when it is maledicent, is sure to find a credulous auditory; and thus even Mr Dewar's worthless book is quoted and extolled as an authority. That there is an enormous mass of evil, of shallow presumption, of ostentatious folly, of wild extravagance, in the German theology of the last half century, I have no disposition to deny: but at the same time they who know what has really been going on in Germany since the publication of Kant's great work, must also know

that in Germany the mighty intellectual war of Christendom has been waged, and is now going on. If the host of evil has become subtiler and more audacious, the army of the faith has also become much stronger; and able champions of the truth are continually raised up, who defend the truth, not by shutting their eyes to its difficulties, and hooting at its adversaries, but by calmly refuting those adversaries, and solving the difficulties, with the help of weapons derived from a higher philology and philosophy. In the wish of introducing some of these better German divines to the English reader, I have availed myself of such opportunities as occurred for inserting extracts from them, many of which, I trust, will be found to justify the foregoing commendation.

Of recent English writers, the one with whose sanction I have chiefly desired, whenever I could, to strengthen my opinions, is the great religious philosopher to whom the mind of our generation in England owes more than to any other man. My gratitude to him I have endeavoured to express by dedicating the following Sermons to his memory; and the offering is so far at least appropriate, in that the main work of his life was to spiritualize, not only our philosophy, but our theology, to raise them both above the empiricism into which they had long been dwindling, and to set them free from the technical trammels of logical systems. Whether he is as much studied by the genial young men of the present day, as he was twenty or thirty years ago, I have no adequate means of judging: but our theological literature teems with errours, such as could hardly have been committed

by persons whose minds had been disciplined by his philosophical method, and had rightly appropriated his principles. So far too as my observation has extended, the third and fourth volumes of his *Remains*, though they were hailed with delight by Arnold on their first appearance, have not yet produced their proper effect on the intellect of the age. It may be that the rich store of profound and beautiful thought contained in them has been weighed down, from being mixt with a few opinions on points of Biblical criticism, likely to be very offensive to persons who know nothing about the history of the Canon. Some of these opinions, to which Coleridge himself ascribed a good deal of importance, seem to me of little worth; some to be decidedly erroneous. Philological criticism, indeed all matters requiring a laborious and accurate investigation of details, were alien from the bent and habits of his mind; and his exegetical studies, such as they were, took place at a period when he had little better than the meagre Rationalism of Eichhorn and Bertholdt to help him. Of the opinions which he imbibed from them, some abode with him through life. These however, along with everything else that can justly be objected to in the *Remains*, do not form a twentieth part of the whole, and may easily be separated from the remainder. Nor do they detract in any way from the sterling sense, the clear and farsighted discernment, the power of tracing principles in their remotest operations, and of referring all things to their first principles, which are manifested in almost every page, and from which we might learn so much. There may be some indeed, who

fancy that Coleridge's day is gone by, and that we have advanced beyond him. I have seen him numbered, along with other persons who would have been no less surprised at their position and company, among the pioneers who prepared the way for our new theological school. This fathering of Tractarianism, as it is termed, upon Coleridge well deserves to rank beside the folly which would father Rationalism upon Luther. Coleridge's far-reaching vision did indeed discern the best part of the speculative truths which our new school has laid hold on and exaggerated and perverted. But in Coleridge's field of view they were comprised along with the complemental truths which limit them, and in their conjunction and coordination with which alone they retain the beneficent power of truth. He saw what our modern theologians see, though it was latent from the vulgar eye in his days; but he also saw what they do not see, what they have closed their eyes on; and he saw far beyond them, because he saw things in their universal principles and laws.

In the Sermon on the Unity of the Church, and in the Dedication prefixt to it, opinions are maintained, which are at variance with those held by a large body, perhaps by the majority, of our Church at the present day. Hence I have thought it expedient to enforce them by the authority of wisdom and of history. To have done this with anything like fulness would have taken a volume to itself: but the illustrations given, however scanty, may enable some to perceive what deplorable evils have arisen from the blind and headstrong pursuit of a false and shadowy unity and uniformity.

I know not whether I need remark that the Sermons are of course complete in themselves, and that, though the Notes are suggested by them, and are intended to illustrate them, they are not meant to be read so as to interrupt the argument of the text, but may more suitably be reserved till afterward. In putting them together I have several times found occasion to introduce observations, which had not occurred to me when the text was passing through the press. These intercalary Notes are designated by a small letter attacht to the capital which was used to designate the preceding regular Note.

Whit-Tuesday, June 2d, 1846.

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SERMON I.

THE EXPEDIENCY OF CHRIST'S DEPARTURE.

JOHN xvi. 7.

Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is expedient for you that I go away. For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

THESE words, it will be remembered, stand in the middle of that divine discourse, in which our blessed Lord, on the eve of His crucifixion, endeavours to cheer and lift up the hearts of His disciples, opening their eyes at the same time to see further than they had ever yet lookt, into the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. In the verses which follow, He goes on to declare what are to be the workings of the Comforter here promist. The whole passage, though it is not without difficulty, is a rich treasure of the most precious truths, bearing both on the deepest questions of doctrine, and on the practical discipline of our hearts and lives. Therefore, knowing no subject of wider and more lasting interest,—inasmuch as its interest is coextensive with the Church of Christ, and will last to the end of the world, while it comes home to the conscience of every faithful member of that Church, —I have thought that it might not be unprofitable to call your attention, during the present Course of Sermons, to this promise of the Comforter; whose coming, as it was to be so great a blessing to the immediate disciples of

our Lord, has in like manner been the source of infinite blessings through all ages in the Church; and whose work in the heart of every true believer has been the very same which is set forth in the verses immediately after the text. May He, who alone can, even the Comforter Himself, who is the Spirit of Truth, teach me to discern the mysteries of that grace, which He is ever pouring on the Church of Christ! May He open my lips to speak the truth! and may He carry that truth with power and with conviction to your hearts!

On that last evening, when the work, which the Son of God had come down from heaven to perform, was drawing to its close, He tells His disciples of the heavy sorrows and afflictions which were hanging over them. He tells them, more plainly than He had ever done before, of that greatest and heaviest sorrow, that they were to be separated from Him,—how He was about to go away from them, and how, *whither He went, they could not come*, at least not for a time. He tells them also of the tribulation and persecution which they would have to endure in the world,—how *the time was coming when whosoever killed them would think he did God service*. But He does not tell them all this to the end that their hearts should be troubled, that they should grieve and faint at the thought of the trials which awaited them. His words to His servants, who trust in Him and love Him, are never meant to give pain. Though they may be bitter in the mouth, unlike the book eaten in the apocalyptic vision, they are always medicinal, and turn to sweetness within. His purpose, in speaking to His disciples of the sufferings which were about to fall upon them, was, that, when all came to pass according to His word, they should not be offended

and startled, so as to loose their hold of the truth, but should remember how He had told them of everything beforehand, and thus even in their sufferings should only find fresh proofs of His divine wisdom; so that, having their faith in Him enlivened and strengthened more and more by every trial, they might be of good cheer, and in Him might have peace. With this purpose, in order that they might have a sure hope to lean on, when danger was gathering round and assailing them, He speaks to them again and again of a great consolation and blessing which they were to receive, of a Comforter, *another Comforter, whom the Father would give to them, and who would abide with them for ever.* This Comforter, He says to them, *is the Spirit of Truth. He is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name; and He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you: and He will testify of Me.* And so measureless and inestimable were the blessings which this Comforter would bestow, that our Lord assures His disciples, it was *expedient for them*, it was for their advantage, that He should go away: *for unless I go away, the Comforter will not come to you; but, if I depart, I will send Him to you.*

No other words could have exprest so strongly what a rich and gracious and peerless gift that of the Comforter was to be. For never was there any intercourse or communion upon earth between man and man, the blessedness of which could for a moment be compared with that found by the disciples in the presence of their Lord. Although Jerusalem, with her priests and her doctors,—the expounders of the Law which prepared the way for Him, and the ministers of the sacrifices which foreshewed Him,—would not listen when He wisht to gather them beneath

the wings of His love, the fishermen of Galilee had listened to His call, had come to Him, and had found shelter. As they had forsaken all for His sake, in Him they had found far more than all. They had found shelter, even as children find shelter beneath the guardian care of their parents. They had found everything that a child can receive from the wisest and most loving of fathers, only of a more perfect kind, and in a higher degree,—help in every need, relief from every anxiety and care, support under every distress, consolation under every affliction, an abundant overflowing supply for every want of body and soul, of heart and mind. They came to Him for food; and He gave them food wherewith to feed thousands; yea, destitute as they were, and although the wilderness was spread around them, He gave them spiritual food wherewith to feed the whole world through all the generations of mankind, and worldfuls over and above. They complained to Him of the fruitlessness of their labours, how they had toiled and toiled, and taken nothing; and at His word they drew in such a draught, that they were dismayed at their success, and began to sink beneath the weight of it. They cried to Him in their terrour at the storm which was raging around them; and the winds and the waves were husht by the breath of His omnipotent word. In Him they had the fulness of Truth and Grace and Wisdom and Peace and Love, yea, the fulness of God, dwelling with them, talking with them face to face, bearing patiently with all their infirmities, upholding them against their own frailties and perversities, warning them against all dangers, and, when through neglect of His warning they fell, lifting them up again, strengthening their hearts and souls, pouring His light into their understandings,

and guiding and leading them onward in the way of everlasting life. Time after time too they had been taught by grievous experience, that, safe and strong and clear-sighted as they were by the side of their Master, when away from Him they were still feeble and helpless and blind. Yet, notwithstanding all this, notwithstanding the blessings which the disciples were daily and hourly receiving from the presence of their Lord, notwithstanding the many sad proofs they had seen of their own ignorance and weakness when out of His sight, still, such was the riches of the grace which the promist Comforter was to bestow on them, that, for the sake of obtaining that grace, it was expedient for them, Jesus tells them, it was better for them, that He should go away and leave them, so that the Comforter might come to them in His stead, and might dwell with them and in them.

This must have sounded very strange in their ears. They must have been unwilling and unable to believe it. They could not but think at the moment, that no happiness would ever be like the happiness they had found in their daily communion with their Master,—that no calamity could be like the calamity of being parted from Him. Thus, when they heard His saying, *sorrow filled their hearts.* Therefore our Saviour enforces His words with an unwonted strength of assurance: *Nevertheless I tell you the truth.* He had always told them the truth. He was full of truth; and, whenever He spake, truth was in all His words. Nay, He was Himself the Truth, the eternal Truth of God. Yet on this occasion, seeing their sorrow, knowing how deep and bitter it must be, He vouchsafed to give them a special solemn assurance, that, as His words had always been

true, so were they now, and so would they who believed them find them, as they had always found them to be. Incredible as it must needs seem to them, vehemently as their hearts revolted from the thought that anything could make amends to them for the loss of their Master, still He told them the truth: it was expedient for them, it was for their good, for their great moral and spiritual good, that He should go away from them, and that they should be separated from Him.

But how could this possibly be? How could it be for the good of the disciples, that Jesus should go away from them, and leave them to themselves? He had been everything to them. He had raised them out of the ignorance, to which they were born. He had taught them to know and to worship God, as God had never been known and worshipt by man,—to know Him as the God of love, and to worship Him in spirit and in truth. He had fed them with the twofold bread of earthly and of heavenly life. He had been their Guide, their Teacher, their Guardian, their ever-present, all-sufficient Friend. All their hopes, all their trust, all their thoughts, all their affections, all their desires, were bound up in Him. How could it be for their advantage, that He should go away and leave them? Let us consider whether there is anything in the ordinary relations of human life, which can help us to understand this. If we look through those relations, the one nearest akin to that in which the disciples stood to their Master, is plainly that which was just now compared with it, between children and their parents. He had been everything to them, as parents are to their children; and they had lookt to Him, had trusted in Him, had cast all their cares upon

Him, as children, without taking thought for themselves, trustfully cast all their cares upon their parents. Now, according to the divinely constituted order of the world, the time, we know, will come for all children, when their entire dependence and reliance upon their parents must cease. The time comes, when they must pass from under the eye of their parents, and must walk alone. And it is expedient for them that this should be so. As it is expedient for children, that at first they should be carried in the arms of their mothers, and that then they should walk in leading-strings, or with some other like support, and so should learn by little and little to walk alone, and that for a long time they should do everything in strict obedience, as though they had no will of their own, according to the commands of their parents, so on the other hand, as they advance toward years of discretion, is it expedient that the human helps, on which they have been accustomed to lean wholly, should one by one be taken away from them. Constant watchfulness and directions are succeeded for a while by occasional watchfulness and directions; commands are superseded by counsel; and after a time we no longer have even the counsel of our natural monitors, but are left to the exercise of our own judgement, and to the advice of such friends as the course of life may bring across our path. Such is the order which God has appointed for the life of man: and this order is expedient (A). We know that it must be so, seeing that He has ordained it; and we can perceive moreover why it is so. Not because it is the glory of man to have a will of his own, and to walk by the light of his own understanding, beneath the supreme uncheckt sway of that will. A heathen indeed

might say this, and might alledge strong grounds in favour of his assertion; though even he, if he desired to walk rightly and stedfastly, would have subordinated his own understanding and will to the manifestations of a higher Understanding and a higher Will discernible in the institutions and belief of his countrymen. But we have a revelation of the perfect Wisdom and perfect Will of God. An atmosphere of eternal Truth compasses us about. We are born in the midst of it: we are taught to breathe it from our childhood: and the great aim and business of our lives should be to bring our understanding and our will into harmony with it, and to set them at one with it. Far assuredly is it from expedient that man should be left to the guidance of his own dimsighted understanding, and to the sway of his own headstrong will. But, as the reason why children are bound to obey their parents with a full implicit unswerving obedience is, that their parents for the time stand in the stead of God to them, — whence we further perceive what is the only rightful limit to that obedience, namely, when the parent's command is plainly contrary to an express commandment of God, — as, I say, they who know of no father but an earthly one, must obey that earthly father, as the author, supporter, and guardian of their life, — so on the other hand, when they have been taught to look up to Him who has vouchsafed to call Himself our heavenly Father, — when they have been taught to see His love, and to know His will, — it is expedient for them that they should pass from under their complete subjection to their earthly father, in order that they may live more consciously and dutifully in the presence, beneath the eye, and under the law of their heavenly Father. It

is expedient for them that they should pass from under the immediate controll of their earthly parents, not in order that they may do their own will, but in order that they may do the will of God, — in order that the shadow may give place to the substance, the earthly type to the heavenly reality, — in order that they may live more entirely by a longersighted further-reaching Faith.

Now the relation between the disciples and their Divine Master was like that between children and their parents in this among other things, that it was a relation rather of sight than of faith; or at least of faith which was wrapt up in sight, and which had not as yet unfolded itself into distinct consciousness. The faith they had hitherto been called upon to exercise, was not a faith in One who was absent, but in One who was always by their side, whom they saw with their eyes, and heard with their ears, and who was daily working visible wonders before them. Hence, their faith having never been trained to see Him when He was absent, and to trust in Him when he was far off, as soon as they were out of His sight, it failed. When He was upon the mount, they were unable through their unbelief to heal the boy who was possest by the evil spirit. When He was asleep, they were afraid lest the sea should swallow them up. And though they fancied that they loved Him above all things, though they fancied that nothing could ever tempt or drive them away from Him, that they could brave every danger, and bear every suffering, rather than forsake Him, yet, no sooner did the soldiers lay hold on Him, than they fled. Such was the weakness of their fancied strength: having never been tried, at the first trial it gave way. Moreover their relation to their Lord

was like that between children and their parents in this also, that, as they had ever found a ready present help in Him for all their wants, He stood in the place of God to them, as a father stands to his child. It is true, He also was God. This however they knew not: they did not regard Him as God, but much more as a man, like, though far superior in power and wisdom, to themselves. Hence, as it is expedient that a child should rise from a visible to an invisible Object of faith, and that his obedience to an earthly should be transfigured into obedience to a heavenly Father, so was it expedient that the love and reverence which the disciples felt for their earthly Lord, should be transfigured into love and reverence for a heavenly Lord; for the same Lord, not for a different one. For the Comforter was to testify of Jesus, was to bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever Jesus had said to them, was to glorify Jesus, was to receive and shew them the things of Jesus. Still, though, when Jesus departed from them, they were not to go to a different Master, — though He who had been their Master hitherto was to continue their only Master unto the end, yet to them, in their eyes, He was to be different. He was no longer to be Jesus of Nazareth, but Christ the Eternal Son of God.

I have been likening the change, which befell the disciples when their Lord was taken from them, to that which happens when a child passes from under the government and controll of its parents to the exercise of self-government and self-controll. This comparison, it seems to me, may help us materially in understanding how it was possible for that change to be expedient for them, and by what process it was to become so.

Therefore we will dwell a little longer upon it, more especially as it will give rise to some considerations bearing closely on our position in this place. In the case of the disciples the change was sudden and rapid, and was completed at once. In the common journey of life on the other hand, we all know, the transition is very gradual; years roll over our heads while it is going on; and there are several stages in its progress. Such is God's gracious plan for fostering and maturing the growth of His reasonable creatures. Such is the care with which He has girt us round. "Parents first season us: then Schoolmasters Deliver us to Laws." These several stages however are not, — at least they ought not to be, — removals into a different region of life. They ought not to be cut off one from another. Rather should each succeeding state be an expansion of that which went before, even as the bud expands into the blossom, and as the blossom, after shedding its robe of beauty, expands into the fruit. At each step indeed we meet with sundry temptations to reject and look back with scorn upon the past. Our vanity prompts us to do so, being flattered by the thought of our having recently achieved an emancipation from a moral and intellectual bondage, to which, through our feebleness and helplessness, we had been compelled to submit. The charms of novelty, the fascination of the present moment, of our present thoughts, of our present feelings, of our present circumstances, which acts almost overpoweringly upon weak minds, to the extinction both of the past and the future, would make us give ourselves up to that moment altogether. Yet the only way in which we can make head against the crushing tyranny of the present,

is by holding fast to the past, to that which was living and permanent in it, merely casting away what was outward and accidental. That which has been the good spirit of the past should abide with us as a guardian angel through life, manifesting itself more and more clearly to the soul, as we rise from one step to another: then alone will every change be expedient.

The first momentous change in a boy's life is that when he passes from under his father's roof to school. This is expedient and fitting in his case, in order that he may be trained betimes for the habits and duties, the energy and the endurance of active life, and in order that he may learn to look upon himself, not merely as a member of a family, but as bound by manifold ties to his fellow men; so that the idea of a state, and of himself as a member of the state, may gradually rise up within him; while the instruction he receives teaches him to connect himself in thought with all past generations, and to view himself as a member of the human race, linkt by innumerable ties of obligation to those who have gone before him, and bound to repay that obligation by labouring diligently for his own age, and for those who shall come after him. For the other sex, whose duties through life are to be mainly domestic, and who are not designed to take part in political or professional activity, such a separation from home is not desirable, unless under peculiar circumstances. But for the healthy and manly development of a boy's character, in a rightful sympathy with the nation he belongs to, it seems to be almost indispensable, so at least as that nothing short of a singular felicity of circumstances can make amends for it; not indeed unaccompanied with danger and

difficulty, but for this very reason necessary, as the training of winter is to a sapling, which is to grow into a noble tree, and to stand the blasts of centuries. Although however it is expedient for the boy to pass from his father's house to school, are not the feelings and thoughts, the affections and principles, which animated and guided him when at home, still to animate and guide him at school? Most pitiable would his lot be, if they did not. He would have no affection, no reverence. His affection for his schoolfellows can only be a transfer of a portion of that which he has learnt to feel for his brothers; his reverence for his master, a transfer of a portion of that which he feels for his parents. And woe to him, if he does not cherish that reverence, which many things will tend to impair and destroy! One part of his life at school, that which lies in his intercourse with his master, will be altogether unprofitable to him and lost, nay, will be hurtful, unfitting his soul for being a habitation of reverent feelings through life. And still more certain woe to him, if the impressions of his new companions efface those of his home! Then, and through his whole life, should the image of his parents and brethren be enshrined in the sanctuary of his heart. Woe to him also, if he forgets the principles which he imbibed at his mother's knees. If he clings to those principles, he may maintain a steady course amid the temptations that will beset him. Else he will drift along, like a fallen leaf, the sport of every casual impulse, a moral and spiritual vagrant.

The next stage in the progressive unfolding of the character, at least for the higher classes, according to the institutions of modern Europe, is, we all know, when the

boy comes forth from the strict discipline and controll of school, to complete that education which is to fit him for the duties and struggles of active life, in some place of study resembling this University. This is the stage, which you, my young friends, have now reacht. You have quitted the constant discipline of school, and that course of study every part of which was prescribed to you by your master; and you have entered on a freer mode of life; you are left more to your own judgement in the regulation both of your studies and of your conduct. And this change also has been expedient for you. On this point perhaps you would all readily agree with me: at least you would all allow and maintain that the change has been a pleasant one. Possibly however the reason why you think the change a pleasant one may not be exactly the reason why it is expedient for you to go through it. Nay, your reason for deeming it pleasant might rather, if we take a Christian point of view, be a reason for deeming it inexpedient; so far namely as that reason comes into play. For why are you glad of the change? May I not say, to express the reason in a word, you are glad, because it made you your own masters? Now this would indeed be a worthy reason for rejoicing, if you had truly become your own masters, if you had acquired a greater dominion over your thoughts and feelings and actions, — if those portions of your nature, which ought to exercise supremacy over the rest, those powers which, as belonging to the divine image within you, constitute your real selves, your reason and your conscience, were become the lords of your being. But if your ground for rejoicing is, that you have acquired greater facilities for indulging an unreasoning and

unreasonable will, for pampering every craving appetite, and following every wayward desire, then, so far as this has been the effect of the change, assuredly it has been anything but expedient. It has been necessary: it has been inevitable: but the very circumstances in your situation which you would select as motives for rejoicing, are those which you are especially called to contend against and subdue. Nor would you, by such a change, have become your own masters, but your own slaves. It would have overthrown the legitimate monarchal constitution of your being, to set up the ochlocracy within you in its stead. This however is the blessed advantage afforded you by the institutions of this place, that here you have many helps and encouragements to train you for the exercise of self-government,—that you have the guardian guidance and watchful superintendence of persons of greater wisdom and experience, anxious to steady you in the paths of good, and to preserve or call you back from evil, —and that the whole system of our daily life, while it allows you a certain degree of liberty, imposes a certain degree of salutary restraint. I am aware, there is much in the habits and spirit of the age, and of your rank in society,—and you will probably find much in some of your companions,—which has an opposite tendency, and holds out pernicious temptations to laxity and self-indulgence. But so much the more does it behove you to cleave with grateful and dutiful reverence to those protecting institutions and to that guardian authority, which God has mercifully appointed to uphold your frail strength at this critical season of your lives. Indeed this is the peculiar advantage which our universities have over those in other countries, that they form a regular step in the

progressive development of freedom, a medium between the constraint of boyhood at school and the absolute unconstraint of manhood in the world. You are here in a sheltered creek, in which you may practise yourselves in a boat of your own, before you lanch out into the broad sea of life. But the greater your advantages and privileges may be, the greater also is your responsibility. The orderly and obedient habits, which you learnt at home in your childhood from the necessities and instincts of nature, and which were imposed upon you at school by the authority of your master, you should here impose upon yourselves. This is of no little importance, even with regard to your studies. If you would render them profitable, they should be orderly, steadily pursued, and in a determinate course; which in this atomic age of literature is more difficult than ever before. But important as discipline is for a strong and sound growth of the intellect, it is still more important for that moral health and strength, whereby you may be enabled to stand hereafter amid the assailing temptations and tumult of the world. As the lessons in the various rudiments of knowledge, which you have learnt in former years, have become a substantial part of your minds, and shape and mould your thoughts, without any special act of reflexion or volition, and often without any consciousness, so should your moral habits be in like manner amalgamated with your moral nature, and should unconsciously regulate and determine your conduct on every, even the slightest occasion. Thus would the child indeed be "father of the man:" and this would be the true discipline and preparation for freedom; which none can enjoy outwardly except he who has it in himself; and which consists in

the orderly, harmonious, uncheckt, unconstrained movement of the heart and soul and mind in the path markt out for them by God.

We have been looking at several instances, in which the changes, occurring in the ordinary course of our lives, are in some measure analogous to that which befell the Apostles when our Lord departed from their sight. In each we have seen that the feelings and rules, which at first are imprest upon us by present objects, are designed to become living elements and principles in our hearts and minds; and that, when a sufficient time has elapst for the inward principle to gain some degree of strength, the outward authority, which imposed and enforced the rule, is taken away. Thus far therefore, with a view to this end, it is expedient, ideally, that these changes should come to pass. Nevertheless in very many cases, we must make the sad acknowledgement, these changes do not prove expedient in fact. That which, according to the divine purpose manifested in our institutions, was intended for our good, does not produce the good it was meant to produce. And why does it fail? It was expedient for the Apostles that Jesus should depart from them, to the end that what they had hitherto regarded with more or less of a carnal eye, should become a living spiritual presence and power in their souls. But how was this effect to be wrought? Was our Lord's departure to produce it? The very thought of their loss cast them down, and filled them with sorrow and dismay; and when they had been separated from him before, they had been taught the lesson of their own weakness. Even after His Resurrection, although they had seen that wonderful proof that the way to power and glory passes through suffering and

selfsacrifice,—although our Lord Himself had expounded the Scriptures to them, and shewn them how this had been determined and revealed from the beginning,—and although He had breathed the Holy Ghost into them, and declared at the same time that the Kingdom which He had come from the Father to establish, and which He now sent them to establish, was one the great ordinance of which was to lie in the remission of sins, and which was only to be spread thereby,—still these things do not seem to have accomplisht any decisive alteration in the frame and temper of their spirits. On the day when our Lord was taken up into heaven, they had not ceast to look for the restoration of the visible kingdom of Israel. Nor can we in the least assume that the change was to be brought about by any act of their own will, or by any process of their own understanding. For it was their will and their understanding that required to be changed and enlarged and set free: and so far were they from being able to effect this work by themselves, that they had withstood every attempt to effect it, and had continued blind beneath the light of those blessed words, which have since opened the eyes of mankind. Assuredly, if the disciples had been left to themselves, our Lord's departure would not have been expedient for them. Rather would it have been like the departure of the living soul, after which the body is motionless and powerless, and decay and dissolution soon commence. The reason, our Lord tells the disciples, why it was expedient for them that He should go away, was, that, when He was gone, He would send the Comforter to them, He would send them the Holy Spirit of God, who would bring back to their remembrance whatever He had said to them, and

would lead them to all the truth (B). For this reason, and for this alone, His departure was expedient, which otherwise would have been the greatest of calamities. Hence, my friends, we may perceive the reason why the changes in the course of our ordinary life, although designed and fitted to be expedient, are so often the contrary. The removal of the boy to school, that of the youth to the university, will not be beneficial, but very injurious, unless the things which he had heard before are brought to his remembrance and dwell in him; unless, when the rule, and the authority which enforced it, are taken away from over his head, the principle, which was the spirit of that rule, comes forth as a living law in his heart. No institutions and ordinances, however wise the end contemplated in them, and however judiciously they may be adapted as preparatives to that end, will work any good of themselves. They are only means whereby the Spirit of God works good in those who yield their hearts and wills to them. Great and precious as are the benefits which the institutions of this place are designed and fitted to bestow on you, you will lose the most precious part of these benefits, the part which would be the most lastingly salutary to your character, unless you look upon them as a gift of God, as an ordinance of God,—as one of the means whereby the Spirit of God would bring back to your remembrance the truths which you were taught in your childhood, — as one of the steps whereby He would gradually lead you to all the truth.

Through His mighty operation, we know, it was soon proved that in this, as in all other things, Jesus did indeed tell His disciples the truth, and that it was most expedient for them that He should go away. The Book of Acts

is the proof that it was so; and no proof was ever completer. Terrible as the blow was, overwhelming and irreparable as the loss could not but seem to the natural eye, that very loss was soon turned by the power of the Spirit into their endless and inestimable gain. The Master, whom they had lost, they found anew: but they found Him, not as a mere man, with the infirmities of the flesh, having no form or comeliness, to make men desire Him: they found Him as God, as the Eternal Onlybegotten Son of God, sitting at the right hand of the Father, governing all things with the power of the Father, and at the same time as their Saviour and Redeemer, and as the Redeemer of all mankind: they found Him, whom the Jews had crucified, made by God both Lord and Christ (c). And greatly as their Master was changed and glorified in their eyes, scarcely less great was the change which took place in their own hearts and souls, in the bent and strength of their characters, and in all their feelings and desires, when the promist Comforter had come to them. The firy baptism of the day of Pentecost consumed and purged away the dross and weaknesses of their nature; and they came out as silver refined and purified seven times by the fire. Out of fearfulness, they were made bold: out of blindness, they were enabled to see. Instead of being frightened and shrinking and hiding themselves, they now came forward in the eye of day, and openly preacht Him whom the Jews had crucified; and they rejoiced with exceeding joy that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus.

Therefore was it expedient for the disciples that Jesus should go away from them. And as it was expedient for them, so through them has it been for mankind, and

in divers ways. For as it was by the coming of the Comforter that the Apostles were led to the whole truth, thereby were they enabled to lay up those treasures of truth, which have been the riches of all subsequent generations. Through the coming of the Comforter were they seated on their thrones, where they have been the examples, the teachers, the guides of the Church for all ages (D). Nay, if Jesus had not gone away from them, we see not how the Gentiles would have been called into the Church. So long as He remained upon earth, the earnest desire of His disciples must needs have been to abide continually within hearing of His blessed words. At the utmost they would have gone forth from Him for a brief while, to return anon into His presence; and thus their preaching would have been confined, as it was during His life, to Judea. Not till He was taken away from them, did they learn to feel that He was with them, not merely in Judea, but in every part of the world. So long as He was living upon earth, He might give light to the country round, like a beacon upon a hill. But it was only from His sunlike throne in the heavens, that He could pour light over every quarter of the globe. It was only from thence that His voice could go forth throughout all the earth, and His words to the end of the world. It was only when He was lifted up, that He was to draw all men to His feet. Then alone could the foundations of His Church be laid so deep and wide, that all nations could be gathered into it (E).

Thus there are several arguments, which, even when we are judging by the light of our own understanding, guided by the analogies of human life, and by the actual events which ensued, may fully satisfy us that it was indeed expedient for the disciples that Christ should go

away from them. It was expedient for them, because it is expedient that men's hearts should be trained and disciplined by hardships and sufferings and afflictions; because it is expedient that they should learn to live by faith in Him who is unseen (F); because moreover it was expedient, in order to their fulfilling the counsel of God, and spreading the glory of His salvation, that they should not be confined to a single country, but should go abroad among the nations, branching, like the river which flowed out of Paradise, and compassing all lands. Thus much we may easily discern. We can discern too that the power, whereby the great loss sustained by the Apostles was turned into their greater gain, did not lie in themselves, but came to them from a higher source, even from the Comforter whom Jesus sent to them. Through the working of that Comforter, the manifold afflictions, which would otherwise have stunned and crusht them, became the means of purifying and elevating their hearts. Through the working of that Comforter, they lived thenceforward a higher life, by faith in Him, whom they had *seen with their eyes*, whom they had *lookt upon*, and *their hands had handled*, and whom they now knew to have sat down at the right hand of God. Through the working of that Comforter, they received boldness and wisdom to go forth over the earth, preaching with tongues of fire, kindling the hearts of the nations, confounding the wise and the mighty, and bringing to nought whatever was then establisht on the thrones of power and knowledge. But our Lord's words are, *For, if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you; but, if I depart, I will send Him to you.* In these words there is a depth of meaning far beyond what we have yet attained to: but they are words which

we must not approach, except with humble and reverent awe, taking off the shoes in which we are wont to walk along the highways and byways of human thought. For they relate to the mysteries hidden in the bosom of the Godhead, to the part which the several Persons in the ever-blessed Trinity bear in the gracious work of our redemption. From other passages of Scripture, as well as from the text, we learn that the gift of the Holy Ghost was connected in some mysterious manner with the completion of Christ's work upon earth. Thus St John, in a former chapter (vii. 39), says, with reference to the promise that the Spirit should be given to such as believe in Christ, *the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified:* which agrees exactly with what we read in our text, that, if Jesus had not gone away, the Comforter would not have come. If we endeavour to understand the whole process of our Redemption, so far as it is set forth in Scripture, it would seem to have been ordained in the eternal counsels of God, manifested as they are, and must needs be, to us under an order of succession, that the sacrifice of Christ should be offered up,—that the full victory over sin, under every form of assailing temptation, should be gained by Christ in behalf, and as the Head and Representative, of all mankind,—before those special gifts of the Holy Ghost, which were to be the glory and the blessing of the New Dispensation, were poured out of the treasury of heaven. Such appears to have been the order appointed in the counsels of God: for such, we know, was the order in which the events took place: such too was the order of the prophetic announcement. The Messiah was to *go up on high*, and to *lead captivity captive*, and then to *receive gifts for men, that the Lord God*

should dwell among them. Accordingly, when the fulfilment was come, St Peter in his sermon declared that *Jesus, being exalted by the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, had shed forth* what the people on the day of Pentecost *saw and heard.* Moreover we find, in the verses immediately after the text, that a main part of the lessons which the Comforter was to teach, related to facts which did not receive their full accomplishment, until our Lord ascended into heaven. Indeed the great purpose of the mission of the Comforter, it would appear from those verses, was to declare the whole scheme of salvation to mankind, to reveal it in all its fulness to their understandings, and to graft this knowledge as a living sanctifying reality in their hearts; so that, were it only on this account, the completion of Christ's work would be an indispensable preliminary to the mission of the Paraclete: and throughout this passage He is spoken of as proceeding, not from the Father only, but from the Father and the Son (G).

Many gifts of the Holy Ghost had indeed been already bestowed on man, even under the old Covenant; above all, the gift of prophecy, whereby *holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost* (2 Pet. i. 21). So too it was declared of John the Baptist, that *he should be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb.* And our Saviour Himself, in one of the passages above referred to, says to the disciples, *I will pray to the Father; and He will give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.* The disciples are here told that they already knew the

Comforter. He was already dwelling with them; for they had already received several gifts, which none can receive except from the Holy Ghost. But the gifts they had hitherto received, like the gifts which had proceeded from Him during the earlier dispensation, were in the main external, such as the power of working miracles (H). The higher gifts of the Holy Ghost,—that transforming power of faith, which nothing can awaken except a lively insight into the sacrifice and mediation of the Saviour,—and those spiritual graces whereby the life of Christ is fashioned in our souls,—had not yet been vouchsafed to them. The Holy Ghost from that time forward was to come down, as He came down at the baptism of Jesus, like a dove, and to abide upon the souls of those who believe in Christ. He was to come to them and to dwell in them, converting their earthly tabernacles into living temples of God (I).

At all events such, we know, is the order in which the work of our regeneration must now take place. We must be buried by baptism into the death of Christ, before we can rise again in newness of life. We must be justified through faith in the death of Christ, before we can be sanctified by the indwelling of His Spirit. The Spirit of sanctification is only given to those who have already been washt from their sins in the all-purifying blood of the Lamb.

Hence even at this day there are many, for whom it is expedient that Jesus should go away from them, and for the selfsame reason for which it was expedient that He should go away from His disciples. Perhaps I might say that even at this day there is no one for whom this is not expedient, or at least for whom it has not been so at some period or other of his life. For we are all of us,

even those who have been brought up with the greatest wisdom and the most diligent culture of their religious affections, far too apt to look at Jesus Christ in the first instance, in the same light in which the disciples mostly lookt upon Him, while He was with them in the body, as a man like ourselves, a perfect man indeed, but still a mere man, who came to teach us about God, and the things of heaven, and the way of attaining to them, and to leave us an example, that we might follow His steps. We read the story of His life in the Gospels; and even our natural hearts are struck and charmed by the surpassing beauty of His character, by His purity, His meekness, His patience, His unweariable self-forgetting activity in every work of love. In our better and more serious moments, when the Bible is in our hands, or when we have been stirred by some eloquent picture of the graces manifested in His life, we wish to be like Him, to do as He did, to obey His commandments, at least a part of them, the part which requires the least selfsacrifice and self-denial. All the time indeed we may be in the habit of acknowledging with our lips that Christ is God, not merely in the public profession of the Creed, but whenever our conversation turns upon religion, and whenever we bring the question distinctly before our own minds. Yet we scarcely think of Him as God: we little think what that acknowledgement means or implies. Our thoughts are solely fixt on the excellence of His human character: and inasmuch as we admire Him, and wish to be like Him, we fancy we may take rank among His true disciples; nay, we even begin to fancy that we have something in common with Him, that our admiration renders us like Him. Thus we glorify human nature for Christ's

sake; and we glorify ourselves as sharing the same nature with Christ. Meanwhile we think little of His death, except on account of the virtues which He manifested before His judges and on the cross. Now he who thinks of Christ in this manner, if he happens by nature to be of a kindly disposition, may at times really try to imitate Him, even as he might try to imitate any other good or great man in history. At times, when brought more immediately and consciously into Christ's presence, by hearing or reading about Him, such persons may be kindled to a longing, and even to an effort, to resemble Him. There are many such persons in the world: there are many assuredly in this congregation. Among the young, especially in the educated classes, this, or something like it, is the ordinary state of feeling with regard to our Saviour. Yes, my young friends, I feel confident that there are many, very many amongst you, who think of our blessed Lord after this fashion, who admire and revere and love the peerless graces of His character, who would rejoice at times to enrich your own character with a portion of those graces, but who have no lively consciousness that Christ is your God, that He is your Saviour, that He died for your sins to bring you to God,—who do not feel that you need His help, who never seek to enter into a living communion with Him, nay, who have no sort of conception what can be meant by such a communion. Accustomed as you are to contemplate the noblest and fairest examples of humanity, that History and Poetry have set up for the admiration of mankind,—accustomed to meditate on the brightest intuitions wherewith Philosophy has solaced her journey through the wilderness of logical speculation,—you are wont to think of

the virtues exhibited in the life of Jesus of Nazareth, as of the same kind, only superior in degree, purer and more perfect. Now this fair ideal of excellent humanity may indeed be a blessing to you for a time, a light to your understandings, and a joy to your hearts,—as the contemplation of all virtue, of whatsoever is lovely and noble, will ever be to a genial and generous spirit. Were you living in a happy island, in an Elysium, where Sin was not, and did not cast her shadow, Death,—were there no evil spirit lurking in your own hearts, and ever and anon rising and shaking himself, and shattering the brittle crust with which amiable feelings and conventional morality may have covered them over,—were there no herd of evil spirits howling and prowling on every side around you, tearing the vitals of society, mangling every soul they can seize, while others more craftily put on the mask of pleasure and gain and honour, and use every art in fawning on our self-love,—in a word, had you no immortal souls slumbering beneath the painted sepulcre of mortality, were you not made in the image of God, and fallen from that image, were you the mere insects of time,—then indeed it might be sufficient for you to bask in the light of an earthly sun. But the light of that sun will pass away from you: the vapours of sin will hide it from your sight: the glaring lights of the world will draw you afar from it: and ere long you will find a night of thick impenetrable darkness spread over you and around you, unless you have a living faith in the Sun of Righteousness, whom neither light nor darkness can conceal, and who shines all the brighter upon the soul when everything else seems cheerless and hopeless.

For all such persons as have no other knowledge of

Christ, no other faith in Him, than that which I have just been describing, it is most expedient that Jesus should go away from them. It is expedient for them that the man Jesus, the fair ideal which they have formed of perfect wisdom and virtue, which has shone as an example before them, and which they have fancied themselves able to follow, should pass away from their minds,—that they should feel its inadequateness to strengthen what is weak in them, and to supply what is wanting,—in order that, by the teaching of the Spirit, opening their eyes to behold their own wants and those of all mankind, they may be led to seek Jesus and to find Him, no longer as a mere Teacher and Example, but transfigured into their God and Saviour and Redeemer. It is expedient for them that some great calamity, be it what it may, — some crack, through which they may look into their own souls, and into the soul of the world,—should befall them,—if so be they may learn thereby that no human virtue can uphold them, no human wisdom comfort them, and may thus be brought to seek a divine Saviour and a divine Comforter (J). So long as they regard Jesus, whether consciously or unconsciously, as a mere man, they will fancy that something approaching at least to His excellence will be attainable by man. Hence they will be content to walk by their own light, to lean on their own arm, to trust in their own strength; and they will not open their hearts to receive the true comfort of the Holy Ghost. We must feel our need of a Comforter, as the Apostles did when bereft of their Lord, before the Comforter Himself can be a Comforter to us. We must be brought to acknowledge our weakness, our helplessness, our sinfulness,—not merely our own personally, which, if others

have surmounted theirs, might also be surmounted by us,—but that of our nature, of our whole fallen race, which, as such, we shall understand to be irremediable by any exertions of our own,—before we can pray earnestly for strength and help and purity from above. That is to say, we must lose Christ as a man, to regain Him as God. We must turn from His life to His death, and to the meaning and purpose of that death, not merely as exhibiting the consummation of human patience and meekness, but as fore-ordained by God from the beginning to be the central act in the history of mankind. We must learn to know and feel how that death was borne for our sakes, and for the sake of all mankind, to deliver us from the bondage of sin, to bring us out of the dark dungeon of our carnal selfish nature, into the light and joy and peace and love, which flow for ever from the face of God. We must learn to perceive how totally different Jesus, even in His human nature, as the Son of man, was from all the rest of mankind; how He alone was pure and holy and without sin; how in Him alone the fulness of the Godhead dwelt. In a word, we must seek through faith to be justified by the blood of Christ, and, casting off all pretensions to any righteousness of our own, to put on His perfect righteousness: and then the Spirit of God, the Comforter, who is the Spirit of Truth, will come and dwell in our hearts, and purify and sanctify them, so that they shall become living temples of God.

SERMON II.

THE CONVICTION OF SIN.

JOHN xvii. 8, 9.

When the Comforter is come, He will convince the world of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgement; of Sin, because they believe not in Me.

IN my former sermon I began to speak to you concerning the mission of the Comforter, whom our Lord, on the evening before His crucifixion, promist to send to His disciples, and whose coming was to be so great a blessing, that it was for their advantage that He should leave them, in order that the Comforter might come to them in His stead. We considered how it was possible that this should be; and we found that, according to the divinely constituted order of human life, it is wisely and beneficently appointed that the outward helps and supports, by which in the first instance we are guided and upheld, should be taken away from us one by one, to the end that we may learn to live more and more by faith in that which is invisible, trusting and leaning, not on our own strength of understanding or of will, but on the wisdom and power of the Spirit of God. We then endeavoured to discern, so far as we may by the light of Scripture, how and why, according to the counsel of God, the sending of the Spirit was ordained to be consequent upon the departure of the Son, so that the Son should return to His heavenly throne

at the right hand of the Father, before the Holy Ghost came down in that special, more abundant outpouring, which was to be the power and the glory of the Christian dispensation. And we were led in conclusion to mark how the same evangelical order still prevails in the spiritual life of individuals, how we are still over-apt in the first instance to fix our thoughts on the mere humanity of our Lord, and how in such cases it is still expedient and necessary that we should lose the Man Jesus, so that we may be led by the Spirit to acknowledge and worship Christ the living God. As it is necessary that the trust in human righteousness, in human virtue, in human strength, not merely in our own, but in that of our whole fallen race, should be stript from the soul, before it can be clothed anew in the divine righteousness of Christ,—and as no man is sanctified by the Spirit of Christ, until he has been justified by the righteousness of Christ,—in like manner it was the will of God that Christ should die for our sins, should rise again for our justification, and should go up into heaven, before our souls could be lifted up by His Spirit from earthly things to heavenly, and enabled to enter with Him into the presence of the Almighty Father.

Thus do all the Persons of the Ever-blessed Trinity vouchsafe to take part in the gracious and glorious work of our Salvation. The Father sent the Son to die for us. The Son became Incarnate in the Form of a Man, to deliver man from his sins, and to bring him to God. He, the Firstborn of the whole Creation, became the Firstborn of His Church, and went up into heaven to be the Head and Ruler of that Church: and to that Church He, in the unity of the Father, gave, and evermore gives His Spirit, to be the Source of her life and power, of

her faith and wisdom and holiness. Upon that Church the Spirit bestows all the graces of the Kingdom of Heaven, sanctifying that blessed Communion of the Faithful, who have found the forgiveness of their sins through the Atoning Sacrifice of the Saviour. But the Spirit is not merely the Spirit of Holiness to those who are in the Church; He is also the Spirit of Power, whereby the Church is strengthened for her warfare against the world: and only through the help of the Spirit has the Church been enabled to carry on that warfare, and to bring the world to the obedience of faith. Indeed it is only through the power of the Spirit, that the power of the world has been overcome in any single soul. It is only through the working of the Spirit, that any one has ever been brought to the knowledge of Christ as his Saviour. As none can come to the Father except through the Son, so none can own in his heart that Jesus Christ is God, except through the conviction wrought in him by the Spirit of God, the Comforter.

The manner in which this conviction was, and still is to be wrought, and the several steps in the process by which the Gospel was to confute the wisdom and to cast down the pride of the world, are declared by our Lord in the verses which follow immediately after His promise, that, when He had departed, He would send the Comforter to His disciples. *And when He is come, He will convince the world of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgement; of Sin, because they believe not in Me; of Righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see Me no more; of Judgement, because the Prince of this world is judged.* These words are not indeed designed to set forth the whole working of the Spirit in the Church. They do

not speak of the gifts which are bestowed on all such as come in sincerity of heart to Christ. They do not speak of that holiness, which is the peculiar gift of the Spirit of Holiness. They do not speak of those excellent fruits of the Spirit, which are enumerated by St Paul,—of that love and joy and peace and longsuffering and gentleness and kindness and good faith and meekness and temperance, which are the sure growth of all such trees as are planted by the Spirit of God. Our Lord is speaking mainly with reference to the help which the disciples were to receive from the Comforter in their warfare against the world. Having told them of the violent opposition and persecution they would have to encounter, He goes on to tell them of the assistance they were to receive from the Paraclete, who was to be their Comforter, their Advocate, their Patron and Guardian and Protector, who was to speak through their mouths, and with whose living sword they were to conquer the world, as the commanders of the great army of faith: *When He is come, He will convince the world of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgement.* Thus these words declare the threefold operation by which the Church was to subdue the world, to cast down the strongholds of its enmity to God, and to prepare it for receiving the adoption of grace. But inasmuch as we are all born in the world, inasmuch as by nature we all have that carnal heart, which is enmity against God, which needs to be subdued in every one of us, and which, even when subdued, is never wholly eradicated, hence the warfare of the Church against the world was not to be transient, but permanent, was not to be carried on merely against those who lie beyond her limits, but was to be waging perpetually, more or less,

against the spirit of the world in the hearts of all her own members. Nor has any man ever been brought to a thorough reception of the grace of the Gospel, until he has been convinced of Sin and of Righteousness and of Judgement by the Spirit of God. Nay, so long as the world retains any hold on our hearts, so long as there is any evil root of carnalmindedness in them, so long do we need the aid of the Spirit, to convince us again and again of Sin and of Righteousness and of Judgement.

In these words, by which our Saviour describes the operation of the promist Comforter, I have thought it advisable to adopt the reading given in the margin of our Version, supported as that reading is by the general consent of commentators on the passage (K). In the received text, you will remember, the work of the Comforter is said to be *to reprove the world of Sin and of Righteousness and of Judgement.* The reason which induced our translators to prefer this rendering to the other, may perhaps have been, that they thought the declaration, that the Spirit should *convince* the world of Sin and of Righteousness and of Judgement, is too widely at variance with the fact; seeing that the chief part of the world is still without the pale of the Church, and that, even within the Church, the number of those in whom a living spiritual conviction of Sin and Righteousness and Judgement has been wrought, is by no means the largest (L). The meaning of the verb *reprove* however falls far short of the original verb ἐλέγχειν, which in a very remarkable passage of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, where it is used in the same sense, and almost in the same relation, as in the text, we translate by *convince.* *If all prophesy,* we there read (xiv. 24), *and there come in an unbeliever*

or an ignorant man, he is convinced by all, he is searcht by all (M). The words which follow prove, that the conviction here spoken of, as being wrought by the power of preaching in the heart of an unbeliever, or an ignorant beginner in Christianity, who happened to come into a Christian congregation, is the very same which in the text is ascribed to the operation of the Comforter, and for the producing of which, prophesying or preaching is ever one of the chief instruments employed by the Spirit. *And thus*, St Paul continues, *the secrets of his heart are made manifest; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God, and declare that God is truly in you.*

Besides, *reproving the world of sin* is a most inadequate description of the working of the Spirit. We did not need that the Spirit of God should come down from heaven, to reprove the world of sin. The words of men, the thoughts of men, the eloquence of men, would have been sufficient to do this. Every preacher of righteousness, from the days of Noah down to the present day, has gone about reproving the world of sin. Everybody who in any age has led a just and holy life, not merely one positively and absolutely so, but one in any way markt in comparison with his neighbours, has reproved the world of sin, at least by his deeds, even though he may never have felt called to do so by his words, though he should never have lifted up his voice against sin, in the ears of the world. Nay, it is not necessary that a man should himself be holy and righteous, in order that he should cry out against sin. The unholy may do so: the unrighteous may do so: the greatest and chiefest of sinners may be the loudest in sending forth their voice through their hollow mask in reproof of their neighbours. Poetry had

reproved the world of sin: indeed this is the special business of two of its branches, comedy and satire. Philosophy had reproved the world of sin: and at the time when the Spirit of God began His great work of convincing the world of sin, the reproofs of Philosophy had become severer and more clamorous, yet also vainer than ever, as she sat on her stately throne in the Porch. But what is the world the better for all this laborious reproving? How much does the world heed it, or care for it? No more than the crater of Etna cares for the roaring and lashing of the waves at its feet. The smoke of sin will still rise up, and stain the face of heaven,— the flames will still burst forth, and spread desolation far and wide,— although the waves of reproof should roll around it unceasingly for century after century. In fact the whole history of man has shewn that reproof, when there is no gentler and more penetrative power working along with it, instead of producing conviction, rather provokes the heart to resist it. *To reprove the world of sin* therefore is a task no way worthy of the Spirit of God; seeing that it is a work which may easily be wrought without His special help, and which has been wrought in all ages without it; seeing too that it is a work, which, when it is accomplisht, is of little avail, but passes over men's hearts, like the wind over a bare rock, scarcely stirring so much as a grain of dust from it, and which has so past for age after age from the beginning of the world until now.

Moreover, while this first part of the operation of the Spirit is thus imperfectly exprest by the words, *reproving the world of Sin*, it is not easy to connect any definite meaning with the latter clauses of the sentence, which,

according to our Version, would declare that the office of the Comforter is *to reprove the world of Righteousness*, and *to reprove the world of Judgement* (N). If the first clause of the sentence stood by itself, the word in our language, which would answer the closeliest to the original, would perhaps be *to convict: the Comforter will convict the world of Sin.* Yet even this would not give the full meaning of the passage: for the conviction was not to be wrought in the minds of others, whether as judges or as mere lookers on, but in the mind and heart of the world itself. The Comforter also did not come to condemn the world, but to save the world. When however we take the second and the third part of the operation of the Spirit into account, I cannot find any word in our language so well fitted for embracing the three cases, as that which our Translators have put in the margin: *the Comforter will convince the world of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgement.* Only the Greek word implies, more distinctly than the English does according to modern usage, that the persons in whom the conviction is to be wrought have resisted it. This however is always an adjunct of the sense in the scriptural use of the word, as where St Paul says that a bishop should *be able to convince the gainsayers* (O). Further we must bear in mind that in this, as in many other of our Lord's promises, a thousand years are regarded as one day. That which was to be effected by His Spirit in the Church during the whole course of ages down to the end of the world, He concentrates, as it were, into a single point of space, and a single moment of time; even as our eye, with the help of distance, concentrates a world into a star (P). For it was not the Tempter alone, who shewed Jesus all the kingdoms of the earth,

and their glory, with the promise of giving them to Him. God also shewed them to Him always. His Father shewed Him how the kingdoms of this world were to become the kingdoms of God and of His Christ, over which He should reign for ever and ever. And this was the joy and the glory for the sake of which He endured the Cross, despising both the shame and the glory of this world, for the joy and the glory He was to bestow on the saints who shall reign with Him for ever.

To reprove the world of sin, I have said, is a work by no means worthy of the Spirit of God. But *to convince the world of Sin*,—to produce a living and lively conviction of it,—to teach mankind what sin is,—to lay it bare under all its masks,—to trace it through all the mazes of its web, and to light on it sitting in the midst thereof, —to shew it to man, not merely as it flashes forth ever and anon in the overt actions of his neighbours, but as it lies smouldering inextinguishably within his own bosom, —to give him a torch wherewith he may explore the dark chambers of his own heart,—to lead him into them, and to open his eyes so that he shall behold some of Sin's countless brood crouching or gamboling in every corner, —to convince a man of sin in this way, by proving to him that it lies at the bottom of all his feelings, and blends with all his thoughts, that the bright-coloured stones, with which he is so fond of decking himself out, and which he takes such delight in gazing at, are only so many bits of brittle worthless glass, and that what he deems to be stars are earthborn meteors, which merely glimmer for the moment they are falling;—to convince the world of sin, by shewing it how sin has tainted its heart, and flows through all its veins, and is mixt up

with its lifeblood;—this is a work which no earthly power can accomplish. No human teacher can do it. Conscience cannot do it. Law, in none of its forms, human or divine, can do it. Nay, the Gospel itself cannot do it. Although the word of God is the sword of the Spirit, yet, unless the Spirit of God draws forth that sword, it lies powerless in its sheath. Only when the Spirit of God wields it, is it *quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, a discerner of the thoughts and purposes of the heart.* Therefore, as the work of convincing the world of sin is one which nothing less than the Spirit of God can effect,—and which yet must be effected thoroughly, if sin is to be driven out from the world,—our Saviour was mercifully pleased to send the Comforter to produce this conviction in mankind.

At first thought indeed, when we hear that the Comforter was sent to convince the world of sin, we can hardly refrain from exclaiming, Of sin? What! can there ever have been a time in the history of the world, when the world needed that the Holy Spirit of God should come down from heaven, in order that it should be convinced of sin? Was there ever a time when man could cast his eyes east or west or north or south, without seeing hosts of sins swarming and buzzing around him in every quarter? when he could look at what his neighbours were doing, when he could look into his own heart, and not behold the very sight, which we read that God saw in the days of Noah, *that the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth?* Was there ever a time when man needed a light from heaven, wherewith to discern that this world, which was made to be the house of God, and in which man was set to minister as the highpriest, by

offering up continual sacrifices of devout thanksgiving and a reasonable obedience, had been converted by him, its apostate highpriest, into a den of thieves, in which Covetousness, and Lust, and Ambition, and Pride, and Gluttony, and Drunkenness, and Falsehood, and Envy, and Malice, and Cruelty, and Revenge, are ever holding their hellish revels? So at first thought one might exclaim: but a moment's reflexion will teach us that there has indeed been such a time. Most true though it be, that never and nowhere has God left Himself without a Witness, to convince the world of sin, yet too often has that Witness been utterly unheeded; too often has its voice been drowned, as the song of a lark would be by the roar of a millstream. The waters that are whirled round by the millwheel, cannot hear the lark singing to them from the heavens: nor can we, when we are tost and dasht about by the world's never-resting wheel, hear the voice of the Witness that God has set for Himself in our hearts. Therefore did God come and speak in the thunders of the Law from Sinai. He came and set up another Witness for Himself, to convince the world of sin, an outward Witness, a Witness that could not be paltered or tampered with, that could not be bribed or drugged or lulled, a Witness that spake in a voice plain, cold, mighty, all-pervading, and unquenchable as Death. Its voice was like the voice of Death; and death was its sanction and its penalty. Yet, although God had sent this great Witness, to convince the world of sin, the world still continued unconvinced. For why? Because the Law forbids the outward act, whereas the seat of sin is in the secret places of the heart. The Law says, *Thou shalt not kill:* but man will still hate. The Law says, *Thou shalt not*

commit adultery: but man will still lust. The Law says, *Thou shalt not steal:* but man will still covet. The Law says, *Thou shalt not bear false witness:* but man will still lie and deceive. The Law, from its very nature, can hardly take cognizance of those evil desires, that concupiscence in the heart, of which outward acts of sin are merely the issue and manifestations: and so long as the Law stands alone, so long as there is no heartsearching prophetic Witness to work along with it in convincing the world of sin, men will easily beguile themselves into believing that, what the Law does not expressly forbid, it allows. Moreover the Law works by fear; not by that fear, which is a part of love, and which cannot be separated from it, the reverential fear of offending and paining Him whom we love,—the fear which would endure any hardship, any suffering, rather than offend Him: not by this fear does the Law work, but by that base and cowardly fear, which is a part of selfishness, the fear of being punisht by Him, of whom we take no thought, except in that we fear Him. The Law therefore could not convince the world of sin, as sin, as a thing to be abhorred and shunned on account of its own hatefulness and godlessness, but merely as a thing to be dreaded and avoided on account of the punishments attacht to it. So that, even after the Law had been delivered, there was still great need of another Witness, a Witness that could search the heart, and turn it inside out, and bring forward all the abominations contained in it,—a Witness too that should appeal, not to its selfish fears, but to every germ of good left in it, to its love, to its gratitude, to its pity, to its hope, to its more generous desires and aspirations,—a Witness that should pick up every little fragment of God's image

still remaining in it, and should piece them all together, and make a new whole of them. Such was the Witness that the world needed; and such was the Witness that God in His infinite mercy sent, to convince the world of sin.

I was asking just now, Can there ever have been a time in the history of the world, when it was needful that the Spirit of God should come down from Heaven to convince the world of sin? But may we not with better reason reverse the question, and ask, Has there ever been a time in the history of the world, when it was not needful that the Spirit of God should come down from heaven to convince the world of sin? a time when the world has been, or could have been, convinced of sin by any lesser power? Nay, has there ever been a single man, from the days of Adam until now, who has not needed that the Spirit of God should come to him to convince him of sin? Has there ever been a single man, who has been able to find out the sinfulness of sin by himself, of his own accord, at his own prompting, with no other guide than his own heart and understanding? Or,—to bring the question home to ourselves,—are there any of you, my brethren, who have been convinced of sin? I trust in God, there are many, very many. For, unless you have been convinced of sin, you can never have entered beyond the outskirts of the Kingdom of Heaven. If you have not experienced that conviction, if you do not feel it now, the Gospel, it is most certain, cannot to you be the wisdom and the power of God unto salvation; Christ Jesus cannot have been made your Wisdom and Righteousness and Sanctification and Redemption. A man who had been born in a prison, and had spent his whole life in it, might not be aware that there was anything

peculiarly dismal in his lot: but should he be delivered from his prison, he could never forget that he had once been a captive, and now is free. Therefore he who knows not that he once was in bonds, must still be in them. At all events how many soever there may be among you, who have indeed been convinced of sin,—and God grant that there may be very many, and that their conviction may daily become deeper, and that their number may continually increase!—you however that have been so already, by whom were you convinced? Not by yourselves assuredly: you rather fought against the conviction, at one time struggled to refute it, at another tried to evade it by all manner of excuses, often, it may be for years, have driven it from your thoughts. Not by your own consciences: if they ever flattered, you listened to them gladly; if they reproved, you turned away. Not by any teachers or monitors with whom this world has supplied you: the pride and shame of the natural man revolts against the thought of a human eye spying into the dark places of his heart; and since in some things such monitors must needs be mistaken, in others will ever be too harsh, comforts itself with the persuasion that the partial errour in the indictment vitiates it altogether. Nor have you been convinced of sin even by the Word of Life, full of life and truth and warning and admonition as it is, which has been stored up for us in the Bible. Any one of these witnesses may indeed have been the means employed in working the conviction in you: but none of them can have wrought it, any more than a hammer can strike, without a living hand to wield it. Only when wielded by the arm of the Comforter, is the word of God indeed like a hammer, that breaks the stony crust of the natural

heart in pieces. If your conviction has been effectual,—if it has pierced through the depths of your soul,—if it has laid hold on your Will, and stript off its tough scales, and made it bow its stiff neck, and taught it to shrink from the sin of which it has been convinced, and to love and to seek after the beauty of holiness,—that conviction must have come to you from above; it must have been wrought in you by the Spirit of God.

Yet we too have still the same witnesses to convince us of sin, that were abiding among mankind in ages of yore, before the coming of the Saviour. We have the voice of Conscience sighing through every fresh crack that we make in God's image in our hearts, and conspiring with our Reason and Imagination, and every other nobler faculty, to admonish us that we are betraying our duty, that we are outraging our better feelings, that we are marring our true aboriginal nature, — to admonish us that we are polluting our souls, and withering and rotting our hearts. But is this enough to convince a man of sin? Is it enough to produce that strong living practical persuasion of the hatefulness of sin, and of our being in its hateful bondage, which alone can be called conviction? Alas! Conscience is so wasted by yearlong neglect, and crusht by reiterated violation, that it scarcely ever utters its warnings and reproofs, except against fresh overt acts of sin. It seldom takes notice of our habitual sins: still less does it rouse us to contend against that sinfulness, which is inwrought in the natural heart. And what is the power of Conscience, even against open outbursts of sin? Does not the drunkard know, if he will but consider, that he is degrading himself below the beasts of the field? Does not he know that he is quenching his reason, that he is blinding the

light of his understanding, that he is cankering all his better feelings, that he is giving up the reins of his will to any fierce passion which may chance to seize on them, that he is sowing the seeds of all manner of disease, and provoking Death to come and reap the crop? And yet, certain and indubitable as this is, the knowledge may not improbably never have constrained him to drink a single glass the less: nay, he is just as likely to drink the more for it, that he may smother, and harden himself against the qualms it gives him. Does not the libertine and the adulterer know, that he is defiling himself, and defiling the partner in his crime,—that he is defiling her whom he pretends, and may perchance believe that he loves, with the foulest and most ignominious impurity? Does not he know that he is snapping the holy bond, by which alone the families of mankind are held together in peace and happiness? Does not he know that he is rudely tearing off the blossoms of that one fair plant, which our first parents brought with them out of Paradise, the sacred plant of pure conjugal love? And yet, the more atrocious the crime, the purer the happiness he is blasting, the more innocent the victim, the greedier, the more impetuous, the more sin-thirsty he will be. What avails it that Conscience should tell her beads? he goes on sinning all the while. No, my brethren; Conscience assuredly has no power to convince sinners of sin. When she is uttering her most righteous words, she often is only casting pearls before swine. The passions of the carnal mind are fretted and irritated by the sight of what is so unlike themselves, and trample them impatiently in the mire.

Thus powerless is Conscience for the warfare against sin. It will indeed lift itself up for a while, if it has

been rightly trained, to resist the first encroaches of sin. As the waters gather around, and begin to heave and swell, it struggles for a while to keep its head above them: but the struggles become fainter and fainter, while the waters rush on more fiercely and tumultuously, until at length it sinks beneath them. Whatever strength it may have, independently of Christianity, is confined to a very few choice spirits: in the great body of mankind it is all but extinct: and where it is not so, it does not speak of sin and sinfulness, but rather of virtue and the dignity of human nature. In all too it greatly needs guidance, instruction, illumination: for its voice is merely a kind of tribunician veto, forbidding that which is recognized to be wrong: but it has no vote in the council of the mind, no discernment in itself to determine what is wrong. For this knowledge it is dependent on our other faculties, intellectual and moral: and they, although they were all designed to be servants and witnesses of Righteousness, and though they cannot fulfill their constitutive idea, unless they are so, yet are too easily perverted and depraved into the servants and witnesses of Unrighteousness. The Imagination, which ought to purify our affections, and to raise us up above the narrownesses of the Understanding, and the debasement of our carnal nature, may too easily become the inflamer of our passions. Being the chief connective link between the visible world and the invisible, ordained "to glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven," it still too often turns away from its appointed task of spiritualizing the senses, and stoops to the ignoble drudgery of sensualizing the spirit. And that the Understanding is over-ready to quit the straight road, and riggle along the crooked paths of evil,

we learn from the example of the serpent, that was more subtile than any beast of the field; an example which has had such hosts of followers, that they who especially profest to be teachers of wisdom, became Sophists.

Or shall we say that the Law at all events must needs be sufficient to convince the world of sin? For we too have the Law, speaking to us in divers ways, and by divers voices. We have the Law of God, the very same Law which was delivered to Moses on the mount. We have the Law of God, as written in the ordinances of Nature, according to which almost every sin is sure to be visited sooner or later by some sort of punishment even in this world. We have the Law of the land. We have the Law of public opinion, by which many sins are doomed to shame, by which many sinners are branded and become outcasts. We have the Law of human affection and esteem, whereby love and friendship and honour are awarded to the amiable and the deserving, and are forfeited by the unamiable and the reprobate. We have the purest and holiest of all Laws, the Law of the Gospel, with all its comfortable assurances, and all its blessed promises, the Law delivered on that Mount, which spake better things than Sinai of old. But is any of these Laws sufficient to convince the world of sin? No... nor all of them put together. They may convince the world of some sins: they may make some persons abstain from some sins: but they will never convince the world of sin, nor make any one abstain from it altogether. One reason of this is, that all these laws, except the last, set their face only against certain sins,—it may be graver or lighter ones, more definite, or more comprehensive,—it may be against a greater or a less number of them. But

they do not set their face against sin itself, as an indwelling disease in the heart, altogether distinct from every outward act and manifestation. They do not attempt to grub up the root of sin, and to clear away the multitudinous fibres of that root spreading on every side, and curling and twining about every feeling and every desire. They are content, some of them, with lopping off the branches, others with hewing down the stem. But sin is not like a fir, which has but one stem, and which, if you cut it down, never shoots up again. You cannot destroy it, as the Asiatic king threatened to destroy Lampsacus, πίτυος τρόπον, at once, summarily, by an outward act, by the axe or the sword. On the contrary, if you merely cut it down, new suckers are sure to spring from it, and it gets many stems instead of one: if you merely prune the branches, it will soon become more luxuriant than ever. So long as the evil spirit is cast out by any other power than the Spirit of God,—so long as the house from which he is cast out remains empty, and the Spirit of God does not come to take up His abode in it,—so long as it is merely swept and garnisht, priding itself on its own cleanness and neatness,—so long is the casting out of no avail. The evil spirit will assuredly come back anon, with other spirits worse than himself. In spite of all that Law can do, when destitute of the higher sanctions of Religion, the vices of a nation in the decrepitude of its civilization will be far worse than those which stained it when first emerging from barbarism.

The Law of Moses, as set forth in the Old Testament, we have already seen, cannot convince mankind of sin. It forbids certain sinful acts: it may withhold us from

committing those acts by the punishments it threatens. Or it enjoins certain observances, which however, as enjoined by Law, can only be outward. But a man might keep all the commandments of Moses; so far as the letter goes, he might stick to the letter of the whole Law; and yet he might wholly neglect the weightier matters of it, justice and mercy. We are not told that the Pharisee said what was not true, when he boasted of his legal righteousness: we are not told that he had broken any one of the commandments: the Publican no doubt had: and yet the Pharisee in God's eyes was a sight more offensive than the Publican. For in the Pharisee, as in his whole sect, we see the tendency of the Law, not to produce the conviction of sin in those who conformed to it, but to puff them up with a vain persuasion of righteousness,—a tendency akin to that of the Stoical philosophy, and shared by every kind of righteousness, except that of faith. It is true that St Paul speaks of the Law as a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ, and that the way in which it leads us to Him, is by convincing us of sin, through our inability to fulfill it. But this is only when the length and breadth and depth of the Law is set before us by the Spirit of God, whereby we learn how incapable we are of fulfilling it: St Paul himself, until he received the conviction of the Spirit, believed himself to be *blameless in regard to legal righteousness* (Phil. iii. 6). When speaking a while back of the commandments, I stopt short of the tenth; and it may perhaps have struck you that the tenth commandment, even according to the mere letter, does go further than the outward act, and lifts up its voice against the sinful desire in the heart. Nevertheless the tenth commandment is far from enough to convince the

heart of sin. At the utmost it will condemn our evil desires at the time when they are grown to a head, and are tempting us to wrong others. So long as they are pent up in our own bosoms, so long as they do not amount to a wish of depriving our neighbour of that which is his, our hearts will readily believe that there is no harm in their evil desires,—that they may indulge in lust, so that it be not after a neighbour's wife,—that they may indulge in covetousness, so that it be not after a neighbour's property. The world swarms with the servants of Mammon and of Ashtaroth, who do not feel that there is any condemnation of their practices in the letter of this commandment.

But if the Law of the Old Testament,—that Law by which man gained so much clearer, distincter, and fuller a knowledge of sin,—is insufficient to convince the world of sin, much more must the same hold with regard to every form of human Law. All such Law deals solely with outward acts, with those outward acts which are hurtful to society, its end being the preservation of social order, and the repression of whatever would infringe it: such acts Law forbids under threat of punishment. This is its only sanction, its only way of enforcing its commands. If a man however be withheld from breaking the Law, if he be kept out of prison, by no higher motive than the fear of punishment, he may be quite as bad, we well know, if not far worse, than many of those who are cast into it. And although the hatred of God against sin be manifested in divers ways in the order of nature, in the framework of society, in the principles whereby men are guided in their dealings and feelings toward each other,—though some sins are punisht almost infallibly

by the loss of health and strength, some by public shame and reproach, some by the forfeiture of those joys which spring up under the steps of such as walk along the path of life in unity,—still all this is very far from enough to convince the world of sin. The various voices of the world, which I have just mentioned, merely condemn some sins, but take no count of others. Pain follows some sins: shame follows some sins; but some are almost held in honour: affection, in the present irregular condition of men's hearts, is seldom meted out with much regard to worth. In fact all these Laws, and even the pure and holy Law of the Gospel, may sound year after year through the hollow caverns of our hearts, without awakening one spiritual feeling in them, without stirring the waters so that they shall rise through the network of weeds spread over them, without arousing anything like genuine shame and lively contrition and repentance. In that beautiful poem, which I have already cited, by one of the meekest and holiest spirits who ever adorned the Church of Christ upon earth, we have an enumeration of the many graces wherewith God surrounds and guards us in a Christian land; and at the same time we are admonisht how vain they all are to convince us effectually of sin.

> Lord, with what care hast Thou begirt us round!
> Parents first season us; then Schoolmasters
> Deliver us to Laws; they send us bound
> To Rules of Reason, holy Messengers,
> Pulpits and Sundays; Sorrow dogging Sin,
> Afflictions sorted, Anguish of all sizes;
> Fine nets and stratagems to catch us in;
> Bibles laid open; millions of Surprises;
> Blessings beforehand, ties of Gratefulness;
> The sound of Glory ringing in our ears;

Without, our Shame; within, our Consciences;
Angels and Grace; eternal Hopes and Fears.
Yet all these fences, and their whole array,
One cunning bosom sin blows quite away.

It would take me too long,—though the time might not be ill spent,—to go minutely through this rich list of the graces and blessings, with which God encompasses us from our cradle to our grave, for the sake of convincing us of sin, and of drawing us away from it, from its slavery and its punishment, from sin and death and hell, to the path of life and the glories of heaven. Parents, with their ever-watchful love, sheltering us under their wings until we have strength to quit our native nest,—Teachers, who train us in the way wherein we are to walk, and fit us for discerning it,—Laws, that set the mark of death upon sin,—Reason, that would deliver us from the bondage of Law, and make the service of duty a free and willing service,—the messengers of the Gospel sent into every corner of the land to call us to the knowledge of God, and to the grace of Christ,—the word of God proclaimed to His people, when they are gathered together in His house,—Sundays, with their holy rest and peace, their many heavenly voices, their prayers and sacraments,—the sorrow and abject misery which follow at the heels of sin,—the afflictions with which God visits His children, sorted to suit their special needs, and to unravel the cords with which the world holds them down,—anguish, greater or less, according as we require it and have strength to bear it,—the delicate network of human order and earthly motives, which offer a kind of counterpart to the order and motives of heaven, and which check us against our will in manifold unthought of ways when we should

otherwise rush into sin, — the Bible laid open in every house, and meeting our eyes at every turn, — the millions, yes, the millions of surprises, showered like stars over the face of life, and evermore reminding us of God's wondrous goodness and mercy, and warning us to think of death, and teaching us the ruin of sin, — the blessings which are poured out upon us beforehand, as a foretaste of the joys of heaven, long ere we have learnt to love God and to serve Him, blessings of love and innocent gladness and a peaceful conscience, bestowed so bountifully even on childhood,—the ties of gratefulness, as well as of duty, whereby God makes the voice of nature herself declare that we must love Him who has so loved us,—the song of the angels ringing in our ears, *Glory to God in the highest*, and telling us of the glory in store for those who have found peace through the goodwill of the Eternal Father, — the shame which pursues sin without, — the stings of Conscience within,—the many servants of God that are sent to comfort us with their timely ministrations,—the Grace bestowed on us in baptism, and which the Holy Spirit, if we hinder not His purpose, would ever increase and strengthen in our souls,— and finally, in order that we may not be dazzled or crusht by the fleeting hopes and fears of this present life, the hopes and fears of eternity,—these are the cherubim wherewith God has surrounded our Eden, to keep the Tempter from approaching it:

> Yet all these fences, and their whole array,
> One cunning bosom sin blows quite away.

Seeing therefore how utterly powerless everything human is, how powerless every Law is, even the holy Law of God, to convince mankind effectually of sin, — that is,

to open our eyes, so that we shall see all its loathsomeness, and all its snares, so that we shall see its power over us and in us, and the living death which that power brings upon all such as yield themselves to it, and may thus be led to flee from it as from a pestilence, and to guard against it as we should if a plague were creeping and sweeping through the land,—it is a work by no means unworthy of the Spirit of God,—for it is a work which nothing but the Spirit of God can accomplish,—to convince the world of sin. For, although even in the natural man there is a spirit that lusteth against the flesh, yet the flesh in the natural man is from the first far more powerful than the spirit, and is always lusting against it; and the flesh is daily fed and fattened by the world, which affords slender nourishment to the spirit; and every victory it gains makes it stronger and prouder, so that the spirit at length is almost extinguisht within us, even as a glowworm would be extinguisht by falling into a muddy pool. Yet, unless man were convinced of sin, the salvation wrought by Christ would be of no effect. Without this conviction by the Spirit, in vain would the Son of God have come in the flesh; in vain would He have died on the cross for the sins of mankind: mankind would not, could not have been saved. They could not, because they would not. Unless a man be well aware that he is labouring under a disease, he will not think of asking for the remedies which might cure him; nor will he take them, although you hold them out to him, and although their efficacy may have been proved in a multitude of cases, more especially if they happen to be distasteful to his vitiated palate. If he mistakes the convulsive fits of a fever for the vigour of health, he

will not consent to practise that abstinence by which his fever might be subdued. Nor, unless we are fully convinced that our souls are tormented by a deadly clinging disease, and that no earthly power or skill can heal them, shall we think of applying earnestly for health to the only Physician of souls.

This brings me to consider, though it must needs be briefly and very imperfectly, in what manner the Spirit convinces the man of his disease, in what manner He convinces the world of sin. If a man is a prey to a mortal disease, which breaks out in blotches and sores, there is no use in merely plastering over the sores: you must go to the root of the disease, and attack it in its strongholds. Else, being checkt from venting itself outwardly, it will rage the fiercelier within. Just so is it with sin. There is little profit in telling a man, who is walking after the lusts of the flesh, that such or such an act is wrong. Unless you go to the root of sin within him, from which all these wrong acts spring, even though you should persuade him to break off some bad practices and habits, you will do him little real lasting essential good. Notwithstanding this reformation, as he will deem it, he may continue just as sinful, just as thorough a slave of sin as ever. Nay, his case may be still more hopeless: for his having overcome a bad habit or two may beguile him into fancying that he is the master of his own heart, can sway it which way he chooses, and has only to will, in order to become a paragon of virtue. Therefore, when the Spirit of God came to convince the world of sin, what was the sin he began with convincing men of? If any of us had to convince a person of the sinfulness of the world, how should we set about it? We should talk,—

should we not?—of the intemperance, and licentiousness, and dishonesty, and fraud, and falsehood, and envy, and ill-nature, and cruelty, and avarice, and ambition, whereby man has turned God's earth into a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth. These however are not the sins, of which the Spirit of God convinces the world: because all these might be swept away; and yet, unless far more was done, the world would still continue just as sinful as before. All these sins, this whole terrible brood of sin, were indeed to be found in every quarter of the earth, so far as it was then peopled, in our Lord's days, no less plentifully than they are now. They had swollen themselves out, and rose up on every side in the face of heaven, like huge mountains: they flowed from country to country, from clime to clime, like rivers: they spread themselves abroad like lakes and seas, lakes of brimstone and dead seas, within the exhalations of which no soul could come and live. Whithersoever the eye turned, it saw one sin riding on the back, or starting from the womb of another. This was the Babel which all nations were busied in building,—and the confusion of tongues did not hinder them,—a Babel underground: they went on digging deeper and deeper, until its nethermost story wellnigh reacht to hell, and was only separated from it by a thin crumbling crust. Nevertheless the Spirit of God, when He came to convince the world of sin, and to bring that conviction home to the hearts of mankind, did not choose out any of these open glaring sins, to taunt and confound them with. He went straight to that sin, which is the root and source of all others, want of faith, the evil heart of unbelief. *When the Comforter is come, He will convince the world of sin, because they believe not in Me.*

Now this is a sin that the world till then had never dreamt of as such: and even at this day few take much thought about it, except those who have been convinced of it by the Spirit, and who therefore have been in great measure delivered from it. For they who have spent their whole lives in thick spiritual blindness, and whose eye is still dark, cannot know what the blessing of sight is, and therefore cannot grieve at their want: they alone, who have emerged into light, can appreciate the misery of the gloom under which they have been lying. Thus, until we have begun to believe, we cannot know what unbelief is, its misery, its sin, its curse. Want of faith is a sin of which no law accuses us: conscience does not accuse us of it. Even among those who desire that the confession of their sins shall not be an empty form, but a reality, and who, with this purpose, are wont to review their conduct, that they may seek forgiveness for their recent misdeeds, very few, I am afraid, take much account of their want of faith. The chief part look solely to their sins of commission, mainly to the evil deeds they may have done, then to the evil words they may have spoken, sometimes, it may be, to the evil thoughts and feelings they may have harboured in their hearts. If a person can tax himself with any act of intemperance or impurity,—if he remembers that he has given way to his anger,—that he has swerved from truth,—if he is distinctly conscious of having indulged in proud or vain or envious imaginations,—he will feel that he has something for which he specially needs forgiveness. If he has no such definite charge to bring against himself, he will fancy his score is clear. Yet our excellent Confession should make us equally mindful of our sins of omission,

of the things which we ought to have done, and which we have left undone. This latter half of our sins, it is to be feared, very many think little or nothing of: and these are far the larger and more numerous half of the two, and no less deadly than the other, even as hunger, if unfed, is no less deadly than sickness. Nor can they be overcome by any one without unceasing watchfulness and prayer: indeed they need this all the more from our aptness to leave them unnoticed. They are the more numerous half, numerous in the very best of us; and as for those, who are not endeavouring earnestly to walk in the law of God, and seeking the help of His Spirit that they may be enabled to walk therein, their sins of omission eat up the whole of their lives. The whole of their lives is one black blot, one vast sin of omission, broken here and there by sins of commission flashing through it. Now these sins of omission do not merely comprise, as at first thought we might incline to suppose, the many things which, if we had made a right use of our time and opportunities, we might have done, but which, through indolence, from giving up our hearts to worldly things, from lukewarmness or self-indulgence, we have failed to do; although even this would be an appalling list. For when did a day pass over the head of any one of us, in looking back on which with a searching eye he would not have found manifold reason to say?—*I might have shewn kindness to such a person today; and I did not;—I might have relieved the wants of such another; and I did not;—I might have softened anger by mild words; and I did not;—I might have upheld the cause of the opprest; I might have defended those who were evil spoken of; and I did not;—I might have encouraged such a person in good; I might have laboured to withhold*

or withdraw another from evil; and I did not;—I might have been more diligent, more obedient, more zealous of good works; I might have shewn more reverence to those above me, more indulgence to those below me: I might have done all this; and therefore I ought to have done all this. For whatever we can do in the service of God, and for the good of our brethren, according to the discreetest economy of our time, with due regard to the various claims upon it, we ought to do. The only way in which we can shew our thankfulness to God for His inestimable goodness in preparing good works for us to walk in, is by striving to walk in them with all our might. Yet this is not all. As in positive sins, in sins of commission, we sin in deed and word and thought, so in negative sins, in sins of omission, do we likewise sin, not only in deed and word, but also in thought. And this last head of sins, the sins of omission in thought, contains the great prime sin, of which the Comforter came to convince mankind, the sin of unbelief, the sin of want of faith, the sin of living without God in the world. Laws, inasmuch as by their nature they deal only with that which manifests itself outwardly, in deed or in word, take no cognizance of this sin. Conscience, which only sounds when some positive sin is trampling upon it, is silent about this. Therefore, if we were to be convinced of it at all, pressing was our need that the Spirit of God should graciously vouchsafe to convince us.

But how comes this to be the great prime sin, the mother sin of all sins? Think, brethren, a moment where we are: think what our business is here. We are in God's world: we are God's creatures: but yet we are cut off from God: we are, as it were, outcasts from God, shut up in the prison of the body, and bound heart and soul

and mind with the chains of the senses. The walls of this our prison hide Him from us. We can neither see Him with our eyes, nor hear Him with our ears: still less can our smell or taste or touch bring us into His presence. Therefore our great business here on earth is to live by faith; for only through faith can we live in the presence of God. When we look through the chambers of this our prison, we find that in it, however stunted and pining with long confinement in an alien atmosphere, there is still an understanding which has some faint power of discerning the ways of God, and a heart which may be brought to feel some faint motion of love for God. If we believed in Him, we should be better able to discern Him, and far better able to love Him. But inasmuch as we cannot perceive Him with our senses, we need the eye of faith. Faith should lift us out of the prison of the body, and free us from the bondage of the senses, and bear us up into the presence of Him, whom no eye hath seen, or can see. Moreover, as God alone is good in Himself, as He is the only Fountain of all good, so that nothing is good except what comes from God, and is received and held in communion with Him, it is plain that, where there is no faith, there can be nothing truly good. The bond of union with God is snapt: the one channel, through which good can flow into our hearts, is cut off: hence we must be like members severed from their body: everything about us must have the taint of death, must partake more or less of the nature of sin. Now what is the state of the world with regard to faith? Surely the world is without faith. Until our hearts have been renewed by the Spirit of God, faith, in this its highest relation, as faith in God, is very weak in most of us, in many almost an utter

blank. Therefore do we give up our mind to dig in the quarries of the body, and our heart to work in the hulks of the senses. We clothe ourselves in the convict-dress of the lusts of the flesh, and put out the eyes of the reason, and tie a clog to the heels of the understanding, and clip the wings of the imagination, and muzzle the will, and tar and feather our feelings with the dust and dirt of the earth. If we had faith in its full life and strength,—if our faith were indeed the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen,—if it gave a body to the future and invisible, so that we could see it as with our eyes, — if our understandings were opened to behold heaven and hell, with the same clearness with which we behold the sky over our heads, and the earth under our feet,—if we could feel the blessedness of communion with God, the unutterable woe of separation from Him, as livelily and intensely as we feel the pleasures and pains of the senses,—it would be impossible for us to sin. As it is declared that the *pure in heart shall see God*, so, if we had that faith which would enable us to see God ever standing at our right hand, and compassing us about with the arms of His power and love, how could we be otherwise than pure in heart? For impurity, of whatsoever kind, sin, of whatsoever kind, is the turning away from God. It is turning our thoughts away from God, and fixing them ever on other objects than God. It is turning our heart away from God, and giving it up to something apart from God,—to something that we love, not in God and through God, as His creature, and His gift, in humble thankfulness to the Giver, but without God, and against God, and in despite of God, without a thought of Him, against His will, in despite of His commandment. It is taking our faith away from God,

and placing it in something else, — the believing that there is anything real, anything true, anything lasting, anything good and worthy and lovely, except God, and that into which He is pleased to pour out from the riches of His surpassing excellencies,—the believing that happiness may be found in something beside communion with God, and dutiful obedience to His will. For this is the curse of unbelief. We will not believe the truth; and therefore God has given us up to believe all manner of lies. There is nothing too gross, too senseless, too wild and extravagant for us to believe. We believe that the fleeting pleasures of the flesh are more substantial and precious than the enduring joys of the spirit,—that the fitful admiration and favour of feeble man are more to be desired than the grace and love of Almighty God,—that earth is truer and more real than heaven, — that a life of a few years is longer and of more importance than a life through eternity,—that the scarred and bloated carcase of sin, with its death's head, and its stinging snakes coiling restlessly around it, is lovelier and more to be desired than the pure and radiant beauty of holiness. Yes, alas, we assuredly do believe these lies: we believe them, all of us, more or less: the natural man believes them wholly; and we never get so far quit of the natural man, as to escape from the last maze of this never-ending labyrinth of falsehood. By our conduct we shew almost daily, in one way or other, that we do believe these lies. Yet, if we had faith, this would be impossible. For faith, while it taught us that God is to be loved above all things, and that a union with God is to be desired above all things, would at the same time teach us that whatever draws us away and separates us from God, is to be shunned and

cast out and abhorred. Thus faith takes the sting out of every temptation, and turns its sweetness into bitterness, its honey into gall. Were a cup of pleasant wine put into your hands, and you knew for certain that a deadly poison was mixt up with the wine, which would rack you with the fiercest pains, and ere long tear soul and body in sunder, — who would drink it? who would not dash it from him forthwith? Yet, if we had but faith, we should know and feel that sin is deadlier than the deadliest poison, that it racks us with fiercer pains, and gives us over to a more terrible dissolution. For it cuts us off from God, from Him who is the only Source of all blessing and peace and joy.

Hence it is, because our want of faith, and the consequent estrangement from God, is our prime original misery and sin,—because it is the curse, through which man's heart only brings forth thorns and thistles,—because it is the occasion, if not the cause, of every other sin, from all which faith would infallibly preserve us, — and because, if we continued without faith, even though every other sin were thoroughly purged from the earth, a fresh brood would immediately spring forth, — therefore it was that, when the Spirit of God came to convince the world of sin, the sin He chose out to be the special object of His conviction, was want of faith. Our Lord's words however, I may be reminded, are not, that the Comforter will convince the world of sin, because they believe not in God, but *because they believe not in Me* (Q); so that this was the great sin of the world, the sin of which it was to be convinced, that it did not believe in Christ. That is to say, it did not believe Him to be the Incarnate Onlybegotten Son of God, the appointed King and Saviour of mankind,

and did not believe in Him as such, as God manifest in the flesh. For God, as He is in Himself, in the mystery of His own unapproachable being, as He dwells in the bright abyss of His own timeless eternity,—He before the glory of whose face the archangels veil their eyes, —He whom none has known or can know, except the Onlybegotten Son, and the Spirit who is One with the Father and the Son,—can hardly become a distinct object even of faith to man. It is only when He vouchsafes to come forth out of His absolute Godhood, in the Person of His Son and Spirit,—when He spreads out His mantle through space, and bids world after world start forth from it, and blossom in unfading light,—when He gathers together the waters of His Eternity into the channel of Time, and commands the days and the years to ripple and roll along them, — it is only when He shews forth His eternal power and lordship in the beauty and order of the universe, in the manner in which matter is made to bow its stubborn neck to law, and to become instinct with motion, and to yield to the transforming powers of life, — in the manner in which worlds, and systems of worlds, and countless systems of beings in each world, are made to work harmoniously together, revealing an unfathomable Unity as the groundwork of infinite diversity,—it is only as He declares Himself to man by the Law written in his heart, and comes to him amid the desert of this sensual life in the still small voice of Conscience, — it is only as God has been pleased to make Himself known by these manifold witnesses, whom He has set up for the manifestation of His glory, that man, without some more special revelation, could know anything or believe anything of God. Nor could all these revelations, wonderful

and glorious as they were, avail to produce a living faith in any child of man. For a living faith implies an immediate conscious personal relation: but all the above-mentioned revelations, except the last, are universal, in which every finite being is swallowed up in the Infinite, like the stars in the Milky-way. On the other hand, God's revelation of Himself, when He stampt His own image on the soul of man, became so marred and faint after the Fall, that man entirely lost sight of its heavenly Original, and regarded it as the creature of his own mind. Therefore, when God was pleased to reveal Himself more especially to man, He revealed Himself at once as standing in a direct relation to man, the God of a chosen family, of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and the God of a chosen people, and at the same time as the Author and Giver of a Law, to which the Law in the heart gave answer, and wherein it recognized its original. And at length, in the fulness of time, He revealed Himself in the person of His Only-begotten Son, taking our nature upon Him, entering into the communion of all our sorrows and infirmities, and placing Himself in the most immediate personal relation to all mankind as their Teacher and King, and to each individual child of man as his Redeemer and Saviour. Moreover, in order that all things might be reconciled to God and to each other by His great Atonement, He declared Love to be the living principle of the Law; thereby setting all the affections of the heart at one with the ordinances of duty, and teaching us that every act of obedience to God's Law is not merely enforced on us by the fear of His power and wrath, but is exactly what, even without any positive injunction, our own hearts, if duly enlightened and purified, would have imposed upon themselves.

Here a difficulty comes across us. In referring just now to our Lord's declaration, that *the pure in heart shall see God*, I remarkt that the converse also is true, and that they who see God must be pure in heart. In fact every impurity is like a thick cloud, spreading before our spiritual eye, and blotting out God from our sight. Thus it is only by purity of heart, that we can attain to seeing God; while it is only through faith, whereby we are enabled to see God, that our hearts can be purified. This is one of the dilemmas of perpetual occurrence, when an idea is subjected to the operations of the understanding, which breaks it up into parts, and contemplates the parts under the category of succession, whereas in themselves they are one, without a before and after. Unless God dwells in our hearts, and hallows them with His presence, they cannot be otherwise than impure; yet, unless they are pure, God cannot dwell in them. For this reason, when the Comforter came to convince the world of sin, the sin, of which He convinced the world, was not that they did not believe in God: for in God, the Unknown God, the Absolute, Infinite, Self-existent Author of all being, cut off and shut out from Him as they were, they could not have any lively faith. Wherefore, after having manifested Himself to mankind in divers ways, in the fulness of time, when the world by a multitude of contrary and often conflicting processes had been ripened for the reception of a reconciling faith, God sent forth His Onlybegotten Son, who was the Express Image of His Person, that in Him men might believe, and through Him in the Father. Hereby He left our unbelief utterly without excuse. Seeing that we were so totally estranged from Him, that the narrowness of our minds could not

recognize Him as God, nor the feebleness of our hearts lift themselves up to Him as such, He sent His Son to dwell amongst us in the form of a Man, that we might know Him in whom we were to believe. Seeing that we shrank in awe from the contemplation of His Infinitude and Omniscience, or lost ourselves in stargazing thereat, Christ came to us in the form of a servant, to prove to our unbelieving carnal minds that what is most godlike in God is not His power. To wean our hearts from the love of the world, to teach us the worthlessness of its pomps and vanities, He came, not as a King, according to the earthly notion of royalty, setting up His throne on the necks of prostrate nations, wafted aloft by their admiring shouts, and clothed either in outward riches and grandeur, or in the riches and grandeur of a commanding intellect and an imperious will, but in a lowly estate, without form or comeliness, the Son of a carpenter, poorer than the poorest person in this congregation, a Wanderer on the face of the earth, not having where to lay His head. Thus came He who was the Son of God. That the justice and holiness of God might not scare us, He came as the Messenger of pardon and peace. That the burthen and shame of our sins might not keep us away, He called on us to cast the burthen upon Him, and Himself bore the shame on the Cross. He came to reconcile us to God, to teach us what God is, and how we may become like God, and live as becomes His children. He shewed us that God is Mercy and Love, that we are to become like God by living a life of mercy and love, that we are to behave ourselves as the children of God by a dutiful ready obedience to the will of our Heavenly Father. Perfect God, He was also Perfect

Man, the Image of His Father, and a Pattern for all who desire to become the children of His Father.

This therefore, since the coming of Christ, is the great, the inexcusable sin of the world, that they will not believe in Christ. Faith in God, we have seen, is the source of all spiritual life, which can only flow from communion with Him; and the want of that faith is the barrenness, out of which all sin springs. Without that faith we have nothing to stand on, nothing to hold by: our reason has no assurance of an all-controlling Law, our life no heavenly Archetype, our heart no eternal Home. From that faith however we have departed so far, that of ourselves we can never regain it. We can no more bring ourselves to believe in God, than we can mount after the eagle up the crystal stairs of the sky. We may indeed be borne up by the wind, but only into a cloud, from which the next moment we may fall plumb down into the bottomless pit. In Christ, on the other hand, we may believe. That is to say, the Godhead is brought down to us in Christ in a manner that does not surpass the reach of our hearts and minds. Nor is there anything in Christ to frighten us away from Him: all His words are full of mercy and love; and He is for ever calling us to come to Him. Although we are sinners, the shame of our sins need not make us fear to approach Him: for it was to sinners He especially came, to call them to repentance and newness of life. Therefore, if we will not believe in Christ, there must be some deeprooted power of sin within us, that keeps us away from Him. It must be, that we love our sins, and will not forsake them. It must be, that we shun God, and will not allow the dew of His love to refresh us, — that we will not be won by His

mercy, that we make light of His pardon, and scorn His peace.

Among those who stay away from Christ, who will not believe in Him, who will not come to Him, the motive of the chief part has ever been, that they are destitute of the consciousness of sin, and of all thoughts and wishes that rise above the objects of the senses, or else that they love their sins, and are determined to cleave to them, in despite of all that God can do to draw them away. Others there are, who will not believe in Christ through pride and selfrighteousness: others have involved themselves inextricably in the labyrinthine abstractions of a sceptical understanding. Some will say, in their high-swelling imaginations, that they need no Redeemer, no Ransom, no Reconciler, no Atonement, no Pardon,—that they can find the way to God by themselves,—that they can build up a tower of their own virtues, a grand and gorgeous tower, virtue above virtue, the top of which shall reach to heaven. Such men there have been more or less in all ages; and the way their devices have been baffled has ever been the same, by the confusion of tongues. They have been unable to understand one another's language. When one of them has askt for bread, his neighbour has given him a stone; when askt for a fish, he has given a serpent; indifference and scorn, instead of sympathy and encouragement. The hand of each has been against his brother. There has been no unity of spirit amongst them, but variance and strife and railing: they have never entered into the bond of peace. This is the other form of sin, by which men are kept away from Christ. The great mass stay away, because their hearts are paralysed and crumbled by carelessness and selfindulgence, or rotted by the

cankering pleasures of sin; the few, because their hearts are hardened and stiffened by pride. The former cannot believe in Christ, the latter will not. Of both these sins, and of every other form of sin by which men are withheld from believing in Christ, the Comforter came to convince the world. The Comforter! Does it seem a strange name to any of you, my brethren, for Him who came on such an errand? Does it seem to you that, in convincing you of your sins, instead of comforting you, He must needs cover you with shame and confusion, and make you sink to the ground in unutterable anguish and dismay? No, dear brethren, it is not so. Those among you whom the Spirit has indeed convinced of sin, will avouch that it is not. They will avouch that, in convincing them of sin, He has proved that He is indeed the Comforter (R). If the conviction and consciousness of sin arises from any other source, then indeed it is enough to crush us with shame, and to harrow us with unimaginable fears. But when it comes from the Spirit of God, it comes with healing and comfort on its wings. Remember what the sin is, of which He convinces us,—that we believe not in Christ. All other conviction of sin would be without hope: here the hope accompanies the conviction, and is one with it. If we have a deep and lively feeling of the sin of not believing in Christ, we must feel at the same time that Christ came to take away this along with all other sins. He came, that we might believe in Him, and that through this faith we might overcome the world, with all its temptations, its fears and its shame, as well as its pleasures and lusts. And O what comfort can be like that, which it yields to the broken and contrite spirit, to feel that the Son of God

has taken away his sins,—that, if he has a true living faith in Christ, they are blotted out for ever, and become as though they had never been? What joy, what peace can be like this, to feel that we are not our own, but Christ's? that we are become members of His holy body, and that our life has been swallowed up in His? that we can rest in His love with the same undoubting confidence with which a child rests in the arms of its mother? that, if we believe in Him, we have nothing to fear about the feebleness and falling short of our services? for that He will work out our salvation for us; yea, that He has wrought it out. Who then is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died for us, to take away our sins, and is risen again for us, to clothe us in His righteousness, and sitteth at the right hand of God, ever making intercession for us, that we may be supported under every trial and danger, and strengthened against every temptation, and delivered from the sin of unbelief and all other sins, and girded with the righteousness of faith, and crowned with all the graces which spring from faith, and at length may be received into the presence of that Father, into which our Elder Brother has entered before us. To whom, as He dwelleth in the bosom of the Father, ever pleading in behalf of His Church, and to the Spirit of the Comforter whom He has sent to sanctify that Church, and to bring the world into it by the conviction of Sin and of Righteousness and of Judgement,—in the Unity of the Eternal Godhead,— be all glory and thanksgiving and blessing and adoration now and for ever.

SERMON III.

THE CONVICTION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

JOHN xvi. 8, 10.

When the Comforter is come, He will convince the world of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgement; of Righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more.

THE first work of the Comforter, as set forth by our Lord, when He promist to send the Spirit of Truth to His disciples, is to convince the world of sin: and we have seen what need there was of this conviction, how greatly the world needed it, how it could not be wrought by any other power, and consequently how it was necessary, for the fulfilment of Christ's gracious purpose to save the world, that the world should be convinced of sin by the Spirit of God. Ever since the Fall the world had been lying under sin. This was the crushing mountain cast upon the race that had rebelled against God, a mountain which sprang out of their own entrails, the root of which was in their own hearts. Beneath it they pined and groaned in their forlorn anguish: beneath it ever and anon they heaved, and tried to shake off some portion of the burthen. At times, when a higher power stirred them to more than ordinary efforts, some clefts and fissures were rent in the mountain, and they caught glimpses of the heavens, which it mostly shut out from

their sight. But such glimpses were brief and fleeting: they were seldom caught, except at the season when the heart of a nation was teeming with the vernal energies of youth: ere long the mountain of sin closed over it again: new sins shot out to choke up the clefts and fissures: the darkness seemed to become still thicker and more hopeless: and they, who before had reared and struggled against it, sank in torpid despondence into the abysmal sleep of death. Even at best man only strove to overcome some particular sins, not to overcome and utterly cast away sin itself. For why? Sin was his own child, the offspring of his own corrupt nature: and though he was able to make out that some of its features were unsightly, and some of its limbs distorted, he could not recognize, — no parent can, — that it was altogether a monster. Being degenerate himself, he perceived not that sin was not the rightful birth of his own true aboriginal nature: for he knew not what that nature ought to have brought forth. He saw not, he had never seen, any pattern of righteousness, by comparison with which he might have discerned his own image, both in its heaven-born purity, and in its earth-sprung deformity. He knew not what he ought to have been; and so he could not feel a due shame and horrour and loathing at the contemplation of what he was.

Such was the state of the world, when the Comforter came from heaven to convince it at once of Sin and of Righteousness: and such also, more or less, is the state of every soul, until the Spirit of God comes to it to work the same twofold conviction. In this, as in other respects, the life of each individual is a sort of likeness and miniature of that of the race. In every man there is a growth

of sin, rooted in the depths of his heart, and which has sprung up from thence contemporaneously with the first awakening of his consciousness, so that he cannot even conceive the possibility of being without it: he cannot by nature even conceive it possible that he should ever act from other motives, or with other aims, than those which come from this root of sin. And this root of sin is not single, but complex. For in every man there is a root of selfishness. He will seek his own good, or what he deems to be such, not the glory of God, not the upholding of Order and Law, not the manifestation and establishment of Truth, not, least of all perhaps, the good of his fellow-creatures. Nay, they who call themselves philosophers, tell him that he cannot act from any other motive, that he must seek his own good, that the notion of seeking anything else is a fantastical delusion, and that the only difference between wisdom and folly, between virtue and vice, is, that wisdom and virtue are longer-sighted, and fix on remoter and more lasting benefits, on stars, instead of *ignes fatui*. Hence, so long as we follow the impulses of our nature, we are apt to refer everything to some selfish end, to our own pleasure, to our profit, to our advancement and exaltation. We do this, as the main business of our lives; and we think it right and fitting so to do: we are told on all sides that it is right and fitting: we have no conception that it can be wrong: we cannot even dream of acting otherwise: and thus it is utterly impossible, until our hearts and minds are lifted out of this state of darkness, that we should have a true conviction either of sin or of righteousness. Again, in every man there is a root of worldly-mindedness. The world

is in all our thoughts; and God is not. It rushes upon us with an overwhelming torrent: it enters into the soul through our eyes, through our ears, through every inlet of the senses, through all our instincts, through all our wants, which crave after the things of this world, through all our natural affections, which fix on the creatures of this world; and thus it smothers and almost extinguishes every germ of feeling that would lead us to something higher, to something beyond the reach of the senses. Hence our aims, our purposes, our wishes, our hopes, our fears are all hemmed in by the world, and summed up in it. A vigorous effort is requisite to shake off this crushing weight even for a moment, to look even for a moment through this bright gaudy mask, which so dazzles and fascinates the senses: and what shall prompt us to make such an effort? what shall endue us with strength to persevere in it? Even when voices come to us and tell us of another world, the unceasing din of this world overpowers them: we fancy they must come from a region of dreams and shadows, which the daylight of real life dispells: and thus, as years roll on, and every year draws a fresh hard layer around the central spirit, we become more and more thoroughly persuaded that this visible world is our only home. Unless some higher power enables us to shake off the yoke of the world, each of us grows by degrees to deem of himself as only one among the myriads of horses set to drag on the chariot of Time,—to deem that his only pleasure is to snatch what provender he can, as he rushes along the way, — that his only glory is to surpass his yokefellows in speed, — and that anon, when his strength fails, the chariot will pass over him, and millions of hoofs will trample him

to dust. Moreover in every man there is a root of carnal or fleshlymindedness. His soul is drugged from childhood upward with the stimulants and opiates of the senses; and he looks upon it as right and becoming and inevitable to desire such pleasures, to seek after them, to indulge in them, so that it be not intemperately and hurtfully.

In every man's heart there is this triple root of sin;—no one who knows his own heart will dispute it;—the root of selfishness, from which spring self-indulgence, self-will, self-esteem, and the whole brood of vanity and pride;—the root of worldlymindedness, which issues in ambition, in covetousness, in the love of money, in the desire of advancement, of honour, of power;—and the root of carnalmindedness, from which, if it be not cut down betimes, and kept diligently from shooting up again, the lusts of the flesh will sprout rankly, and overrun and stifle the soul. In their excess indeed, when these vices become injurious to a man himself, or to others, they are reprobated by the judicious and soberminded. But when they are kept under a certain controll, so far are they from being reprobated, that the man who so controlls them is counted worthy of admiration. These too are the motives and incentives constantly urged and appealed to in men's dealings with each other, even, alas! in the processes of education; which is too often a systematic training and exercising of the young in habits of selfishness, of worldlymindedness, nay, not seldom of carnalmindedness, whereby those vices acquire an uncontested sway in the heart. For they who are themselves worldlyminded and carnalminded, cannot understand how it is possible to act upon others by any other motives than those the force of which they themselves acknowledge, whips and spurs, bribes and

blows, the hope of reward and the fear of punishment. They cannot understand how a heart can be drawn, when no other force is applied to it than the unseen cords of love. Not knowing the power of God, not knowing how that power is essentially and indissolubly one with His holiness, they think they shall never be strong enough to contend against the powers of evil, unless they enlist some of those powers on their own side. They cannot believe that there is any sure plan of driving out or keeping under one devil, except by calling in the aid of another. Thus children are made to walk from the first in the way in which they should not go. The very processes of education bear witness to the radical corruption of our nature. They shew that evil has spread through every region of our thoughts, until we cannot even conceive the possibility of doing without it, so that, in seeking strong medicines, we can find none but poisons. The child is brought up under the persuasion that he is altogether a child of this world, that he is so, and cannot be otherwise, and is not even to think of being otherwise. He is made indeed to learn a lesson out of a book, which tells him that he is a child of God, and the heir of a heavenly kingdom; and he is bid to reverence this book as sacred. But this, he is compelled to conclude, must mean that the lesson has no manner of bearing on the affairs of this world, and is only designed to be laid by in some remote cellar of his mind, that it may serve him in stead when all things of higher value and more pressing interest are swept away. For the present he is unremittingly admonisht that his main business is to get a permanent footing here on earth, to appropriate as much as he can of the goods of this world, to lift himself up as high as he can

in the eyes of his neighbours. Such is the ordinary course of education even in this Christian land; and almost all the changes, almost all the improvements, as they have been deemed, which have been made in our systems of education since the beginning of this century, have only tended more and more to call out and inflame the worldly stimulants of action, more and more to draw the student out of the quiet garden of loving contemplation, into the throng and pressure of emulous contention.

Thus wofully does our mode of education, which in a Christian land ought to aim at convincing the heart and mind from the first both of sin and of righteousnes, tend in all its stages, from the nursery up to the university, to confound the ideas of the two, setting up what is deemed a middle term between them as the object of aim and worship, but what in fact is the mere offspring of sin, masking itself in the garb of righteousness. For hell is ever striving to rise up into a likeness of heaven; but there are no steps or shadings off by which heaven can descend from its ethereal purity to the borders of hell. And then, when the youth, who has been thus trained, comes forth into the world, he finds the same deficiencies and the same confusion in the institutions and practices of society, which have already proved so delusive and pernicious to him. For civil society, being the creature of this world, and having its ground and its end in this world, inevitably regards its members as children of this world, and in all its dealings with them treats them mainly, if not absolutely, as such. Moreover its chief immediate purpose is much rather protection from evil, than the exercising any positive influence for eliciting or promoting good. I speak not of what it ought to be, according to

the highest idea of the body politic, but of what it ever has been, and is. Even laws, which are the utterance of the moral voice of the state, confine themselves to prohibition and repression. They do not attempt to cultivate the fields of righteousness, but merely to erect a palisade and network against the inroads of crime, driving in new stakes and weaving new meshes, in proportion as evil devises new snares and new modes of attack. Their language is, *Thou shalt not*, speaking to him who is inclined to violate them, and seldom enjoining anything good, because it belongs to them to be imperative; whereas good cannot be enforced, it being of the very essence of good to be free and spontaneous, not to spring from constraint and compulsion. On the other hand, while the very efforts which society makes for the sake of righteousness, are thus confined to that which is merely negative, he who walks abroad in the world, and listens to its voices, and mixes in its doings, finds a universal conspiracy, I might almost call it, in behalf of sin, against holiness and godliness. He finds the habits, the manners, the customs, the practices of men, all leagued in favour of this world, all combined to hold up the prizes of this world as the sole objects of desire and endeavour. He finds false notions of honour, false views of propriety, false estimates of interest: duty is left out of account: heaven is condemned to remain within the church-door. The whole language of conversation is infected with this taint; and it might fill a thoughtful man with sadness, if not with despondency, to observe how subtily it insinuates itself into the commonest remark on the conduct of others, to hear how people reason and jest and praise and blame, as though it were utterly inconceivable that a man should

act from any motive, except such as have respect to his own temporal advantage. Thus the evil tendencies of our nature are rooted and confirmed; and the vices which spring from them are perpetuated, and handed down from generation to generation. Instead of checking and suppressing them, the customs of society rather foster and strengthen, and in a manner legalize them; so that they could not but spread more and more widely, and become ranker and more ineradicable, with the increase of civilization, unless the Comforter were ever unweariably pursuing His gracious work of convincing the world of sin and of righteousness.

We have seen in the last sermon, what great need there was, what great need there ever has been, and still is, that the Holy Spirit of God should come down from heaven, to convince the world of sin. We have seen how utterly impossible it was for this conviction to be wrought in the world, how impossible it is for such a conviction to be wrought efficiently and sufficiently in any single heart, by any other power than that of the Spirit of God. The remarks just made may assist us in perceiving that there was no less need of the help of the Spirit, to convince the world of righteousness; and that still moreover there is the same need of His help, in order that this conviction may be graven in deep and living characters on each individual soul. We need the help of the Comforter to do this, because no other power can; and because, unless we are indeed convinced of righteousnes, as well as of sin, the work of the Spirit will be imperfect and fruitless. For why are we to be convinced of sin? why does the Holy Spirit vouchsafe to work this conviction in us? Not in order that we may

continue in sin; but in order that we may flee from it, —in order that, discerning how hateful it is, how terrible, how deadly, we may flee from it with fear and loathing, and seek shelter in the blessed abode of righteousness. But the natural man knows of no such abode: he knows of no righteousness, of nothing really deserving the name. As on the one hand he has no distinct and full conception of sin, so on the other hand has he none of righteousness. He has no notion of the blackness of the one, no notion of the white saintly purity of the other: all morality with him is of a dull misty grey: his virtues and vices run one into the other; and it is often hard to know them apart. As his conception of sin seldom goes beyond the outward acts, the vices and crimes which spring from it, and even of these takes little count, until they are full grown; so his righteousness also is for the most part made up of outward acts, and of forms and rites and ceremonies, a thing of shreds and patches, full of holes and darns.

The cause which makes man incapable of conceiving a true and perfect idea of righteousness, has come before us already. A muddy pool, a crackt and spotted mirror will not reflect a distinct and pure image. That which is exalted so far beyond the reach of our nature, cannot have place in any of our thoughts. Man cannot even frame such an idea as an object of intellectual contemplation: much less can he embody it as an object of love and worship for his heart. A slight glance at the chief facts presented by the history of the world may suffice to shew that this is so. For suppose the fact had been otherwise,—suppose that man had been able to form a distinct and lively idea of righteousness,—where should we look with the expectation of finding the personification of that idea? Surely

we should look to the objects of religious worship, to the gods before whom men have bowed down. Surely we might reasonably imagine that the gods worshipt by each nation would express the most perfect idea it could form of righteousness. And what do we find? There is hardly a sin by which human nature has ever been degraded, but man in his blind madness has given it a throne in the hearts of his gods. As though he had retained a dim consciousness that he had been made in the image of God, he inverted the truth in such manner, that each nation made its gods in its own image, investing them with its own attributes, with its own weaknesses and passions and vices. Lust, and Fraud, and Hatred, and Envy, and Jealousy, and Bloodthirstiness were seated in huger dimensions among the inhabitants of heaven. These however, it may be objected, were the frenzies of rude barbarous ages; and as each nation became more enlightened, it elevated and purified its conceptions of its deities. To a certain extent this is true. At the same time, in proportion as the idea of the Deity was refined and purified, it also lost its power, by losing its affinity to humanity, and fading away into an abstraction. Such is the God of Philosophy. Philosophy rejects the clue afforded by the declaration that man was made in the image of His Maker. Entirely indeed it cannot; for man cannot form a conception of any qualities, beyond those of which he finds the stamp in his own consciousness. But the qualities which Philosophy ascribes to its God, are mostly those which are the least peculiarly human, those which man shares in no disproportionate degree with the rest of the creation, above all, power; to which it assigns certain attributes, mostly negations of the conditions of time and

space. In its recoil from the gross anthropopathy of the vulgar notions, it falls into the vacuum of absolute apathy. Hence there is nothing in the God of Philosophy, any more than in the national and popular gods of the heathens, that can convince the world of righteousness.

Poetry however, which culls the fairest flowers of human life, and brightens them still more with the glowing hues of the imagination,—has that no power to convince the world of righteousness? None. It is an ordinary remark, that, when anything like the delineation of a perfect character is attempted in poetry, it is vapid and lifeless. For it loses all resemblance to human nature, and wanes away, like the God of Philosophy, into a skeleton clothed in shadowy abstractions. A tincture of evil would seem almost necessary to render men objects of sympathy. And this is the reason why the prince of philosophers excludes poets from his ideal republic; because the main sources of their interest lie in the contentious passions of men; and because, instead of convincing the world either of sin or of righteousness, they rather glorify many of men's vices, and draw their readers away from the contemplation of the philosophic idea (s).

Yet Philosophy itself has been utterly unable to convince the world of righteousness. Nay, it has been utterly unable to convince itself thereof. From the very first indeed, as soon as man began to make his moral nature an object of reflexion and examination, Philosophy endeavoured to lay hold on some idea of righteousness, and to claim the homage of mankind for it; and almost contemporaneous with this attempt on the part of Philosophy was that of Sophistry to stick up some carnal notion in the room of the spiritual idea; which notion, as being

nearer akin to man's carnal nature, has ever met with readier acceptance than the idea which approacht nigher to the truth. One of these false and idolatrous notions, which, as you will remember, was set up by some of the bolder sophists, and which the great Athenian philosopher laid on the rack of his searching dialectics, was, that *Might is Right.* This is the doctrine of righteousness which, one may suppose, would be proclaimed by a conclave of wild beasts, the lion's doctrine, and the tiger's. Yet, amid the ever-revolving cycle of errour, it has been promulgated anew of late years. As though Christ had never lived, as though the Holy Spirit had never come down to convince the world of righteousness, it has been again asserted in our days that Might is Right. Do we then need that the son of Sophroniscus should rise from his grave, to expose this mischievous fallacy over again? Surely he has exposed it thoroughly, not for his own age merely, but for ever. Surely, my friends, you, in this Christian land, in this seat of Christian learning, will none of you allow yourselves to be imposed on by so gross and glaring a delusion. This is indeed merely another expression of the same carnal mind, which would merge all the attributes of the Godhead in naked power. But we know that, though the strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks, yet the Lord was not in the strong wind. Nor was He in the earthquake: nor was He in the fire. In what then was He? In the still small voice: and this is one of its holy utterances,—*Right is Might.* As sure as God liveth, as sure as the Holy One of Israel is the Lord of Hosts, the Almighty, Right is Might, and ever was, and ever shall be so. Holiness is might: Meekness is might: Patience is might: Humility

is might: Self-denial and Self-sacrifice is might: Faith is might: Love is might: every gift of the Spirit is might. The Cross was two pieces of dead wood; and a helpless unresisting Man was nailed to it: yet it was mightier than the world, and triumpht, and will ever triumph over it. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but no pure holy deed, or word, or thought. On the other hand might, that which the children of earth call so, the strong wind, the earthquake, the fire, perishes through its own violence, self-exhausted and self-consumed; as our age of the world has been allowed to witness in the most signal example. For many of us remember, and they who do not have heard from their fathers, how the mightiest man on earth, he who had girt himself with all might, except that of right, burst like a tempest-cloud, burnt himself out like a conflagration, and only left the scars of his ravages to mark where he had been. Who among you can look into an infant's face, and not see a power in it mightier than all the armies of Attila or Napoleon?

There is a kindred errour however, my young friends, by which many at your age have been fascinated and blinded, against which therefore I would fain warn you. Yours is the age at which the intellect takes the greatest strides, at which its growth is the rapidest. Your main business here is to cultivate it; and if you are diligent in availing yourselves of the means within your reach, you see its empire extending almost daily before you. You are invited into a temple where the wise and bright-minded men of all ages and nations, the heroes in the world of thought, are seated around, uttering their sweetest and most potent words in your ears; and you are evermore reminded how Nature has revealed herself to them, how

Fame has crowned them, how mankind have mounted by the marble steps of their writings from ignorance to knowledge, from weakness to power. Thus an aptness to prize intellectual energy as the supreme object of human endeavour is one of the chief temptations whereby you, especially the more vigorous among you, are beset. Moreover the whole scheme of education in this place attaches a high value,—let me say, an inordinately high value,—to such power; and several of the nobler tendencies of youth, its spirit of enterprise, its disinterestedness, its idealism, conspire too readily therewith. Hence at your age men have ever been prone to regard intellectual eminence as the criterion of worth. Above all are they so prone in days like ours, when there is such a restless craving for novel excitement, and such a dearth of sound, stable, time-hallowed doctrines; so that the reverence, which of yore was paid to acknowledged truth, is now often at a loss for an object, unless it can find one in some individual teacher. You will be tempted to regard genius, or what you may deem to be such, as an excuse, if not a warrant, for all manner of moral aberrations. You will be tempted to believe that genius is a law to itself, and to transfer this proposition from the intellectual region, where alone it has any propriety, to the moral. In the intellectual world, it is true, the highest genius is a law to itself. But then bear in mind that it must be a law to itself; whereas this assertion is mostly brought forward with the view of maintaining that genius is exempt from all law. As love is the fulfilling of the law, not by neglecting, but by fulfilling it,—by entering into it, and animating and pervading it, and infusing a living power into its forms, not by standing aloft, and looking down or trampling upon it, — so is

genius the fulfilling of the laws of the intellectual world, discerning them by an involuntary, and almost unconscious intuition, and embodying them in some creation of its own. In the moral order of things on the other hand genius is a perilous eminence, as precipitous as it is lofty. Being mostly united to acuter sensibilities, it receives all impressions, evil as well as good, more vividly; and from a latent consciousness that it ought to penetrate to the core of things, it submits reluctantly to the restraint of conventional usages and establisht institutions. Yet its superiority, instead of emancipating it from moral obligation, increases its responsibility. In this, as in other things, much will be required from him to whom much is given. The receiver of ten talents has to bring in ten more, and then to rule over ten cities. When a man is endowed with such a portion, one of the fairest and most precious, of earth's riches, he is especially called upon to shew forth his thankfulness: for precious indeed it is, if rightly employed; whereas, if it be squandered, if it be misapplied and perverted, it sharpens our woe, and deepens our shame. The possessors of eminent intellectual gifts are the more bound to employ their gifts diligently and faithfully in the service of the Giver, letting the light which he has set up within them shine abroad for His glory, and for the enlightening of their brethren. At the same time it behoves them to exercise peculiar watchfulness lest they enter into temptation, lest they fall into the snares by which their path is surrounded, and which to them are still more dangerous than to others. Among the most miserable and abject of men, as numerous examples in the history of literature shew, have been those who, having a certain allotment of talents, betrayed the

trust reposed in them, prostituted their faculties to the service of the world, became venal, unprincipled, reckless, and gradually wasted away, until they were a mere wreck in soul and mind,—till their hearts were burnt out, and they retained nothing but the dregs of their former understandings. Many of these had set out with no ignoble purpose, not a few with something of a generous ardour: only having been taught to believe that they might worthily devote themselves to the pursuit of fame, they naturally and unresistingly became a prey to vanity, and were tainted more and more with its sordidness, its jealousies, its hypocrisies. At present, when new regions of thought are perpetually opening before you, you may fancy that so they will continue to open, and will ever fill you with fresh delight: you may deem that life cannot be spent more honorably, or more happily, than in striving to circumnavigate the intellectual globe. But this is not so. Mere speculation after a time loses its charm: we feel that it is unsatisfying: we find out that there is something within us beside the machinery of thought, and that, unless that other portion of our nature be allowed to act freely, the machinery of thought itself rusts and gets into disorder. Nor can the mere intellect curb and subdue the senses, which will often run riot and cast it to the ground, maimed and shattered. When the heart is sound and healthy indeed, when the soul is turned godward, when our minds, built upon the rock of an undoubting faith, endeavour to discover the manifestations of Him in whom they believe, according as He has chosen to manifest His will, whether in the outward world, or in mankind, in their nature or their destinies, then such speculations will be a source of joy that will never fail,

never lose its freshness. But only then. It is only the path of the righteous, whether it lies through thought or through action, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

The time will not allow me to examine the other manifold ways in which Philosophy has proved her incompetence to convince the world of righteousness. Nor indeed can it be requisite to do more than remind you of that system, which has been brought forward under various forms, evermore shooting forth new heads, as soon as one has been cut off, from the earliest times down to the latest, and which not only avows this incompetence, but makes a boast of it, absolutely denying that there is such a thing as righteousness attainable, or even conceivable by man, denying that there is any such thing as right and wrong inherently and essentially so, denying that man can do anything or desire anything as right or wrong in itself, or from any other motive than his own personal pleasure or advantage. This philosophy, which has tried to complete and perpetuate the work of the Fall, and has set its hand and seal to the deed whereby we were cut off from God, declaring that there is nothing in man whereby he can hold communion with God, or even desire such communion, — for he who sought it upon selfish grounds would be self-doomed to utter isolation,—this philosophy, which thus opposes the work of Christ, and tells men that the act of self-sacrifice, whereunto Christ has called them, is a fantastical dream, and a sheer impossibility,—has been taught, we know, even in this Christian land; it has been taught, alas, even in this University. There can hardly be a sadder proof of the antichristian spirit of the last century, than that this antichristian system of philosophy

should have been proclaimed authoritatively in a University, where the great body of the teachers must not only be members, but ministers of the Church. Blessed be God however! there are signs which bode that ere long it will be wholly driven out from hence. Among the changes which have taken place here of late years,—where much has been changed for the better, and something, it may be, for the worse,—none has filled my heart with such satisfaction, none seems to hold out such an assurance of good to our students, as that which promises that this University will again become a school of sound, high-principled, Christian moral philosophy.

Nor can I discuss the characteristics of that system, of nobler origin and tendency, which did indeed attempt to do something in the way of convincing the world of righteousness, but which failed, as it could not avoid failing, for this among other reasons, that there was no true living idea of righteousness made manifest to man, of which it might convince the world. Its righteousness was a righteousness of the understanding. Therefore was it a righteousness of pride: for there is an aptness in the understanding to look down upon all things, as tools and instruments wherewith it may deal at will, as empty shells the chief use of which is to embody and clothe its truths: nay, it can hardly refrain from assuming that the act of understanding implies a superiority to that which is understood. Therefore too was this righteousness a righteousness of insulation: for the understanding has no sympathy, no fellow-feeling with other existences: it cares solely for the forms of things, or rather for its own forms, which it discerns in the mirror they present to it: the business of the understanding is to look far off; the further, the more

pleasure it takes in what it sees: that which is near and familiar, it disregards: it is heartless and homeless. Therefore moreover was this righteousness a righteousness of lifeless abstractions, instead of living realities, cleaving to modes and words, rather than to principles, magnifying the formal in all things, to the disparagement of the essence and spirit. It was a self-righteousness, that is, no righteousness at all,—a righteousness in its own eyes, which can never be a righteousness in the eyes of God, — a righteousness in which the impure was to purify the impure, and the unjust to justify the unjust. And as it has been seen in all nations, and in the systems of all philosophers, that no human understanding, not even the etherial one of Plato, could discern the divine affinities in the affections, or set itself in harmony with them,—as the primary crack between the heart and the understanding, which ensued upon the usurpation of the latter, drawing man away to the love of knowledge as a power in himself, from the love of the Object of knowledge, has run through the whole human race, so that they have never been reunited, except by the atonement of Christ,—thus did this philosophy shew its incapacity to convince the world of righteousness, by giving up the best parts of our nature as irretrievable into the hands of the enemy, throwing wife and children and brothers and sisters and friends, and the whole world, overboard, for the sake of preserving its own worthless self to float in desolate self-complacency on a plank in the dead sea.

Hence we perceive what need there was that the Spirit of God should undertake the task of convincing the world of righteousness. For no other power could. Philosophy could not: Poetry could not: Religion, in the corrupt

forms in which it prevailed among the heathens, could not: the aspect of life could not. They could not yield man the spectacle of righteousness as a living active reality, nor even as an idea for contemplation. Meanwhile the Law, sounding with its naked *Thou shalt not*, and knocking at the ears of those who were living in daily commission of the acts it forbad, was convincing the world of unrighteousness. This however was not enough to fulfill the merciful purpose of God. *The righteous God loveth righteousness.* He loveth to behold His own image in His creatures. He made this earth to be the abode of righteousness; and He was mercifully pleased to decree that it should not be given up to Sin, but that Righteousness should dwell upon it, Righteousness in its highest perfection, even His own Righteousness, pure and holy and without spot. Therefore this was the second work of the Comforter. As He came to convince the world of sin, because no other power could, so did He come to convince the world of righteousness, because this too was a work which He alone could accomplish.

When the Comforter is come, He will convince the world of righteousness. The sin, of which the Comforter was to convince the world, was the sin of want of faith, of not believing in Christ. Accordingly He was to convince the world of its own sin. Was He also to convince the world of its own righteousness? That could not be. Where sin is, righteousness is not, at least no true, pure, genuine righteousness; and the Comforter can only convince of the truth. As the sin of the world was its want of faith, so on the other hand righteousness can only come to it through faith; and the reason why the world from the beginning has been so barren of righteousness is no other

than this, that it has not been animated by a strong living principle of faith. Want of faith, we have seen, is the great sin of the world, and the one prime source and fountain-head of all other sins. This is the cankerworm, which has been gnawing at the heart of the world, ever since our first parents gave ear to the voice of the Tempter, beguiling them to withdraw their faith from the word of God, and to place it in the deceitful shows of the senses: and hence it is, by reason of our want of faith, by reason of this cankerworm gnawing at our heart, that all our blossoms have been so pale and blighted, and all our leaves so shriveled. We have seldom strength to produce what is fair in itself, much less what shall be vigorous enough to resist the blasts of temptation. In every age of the world, under all the forms of social life, and all the gradations of culture, this has been the great sin of mankind. It was so before the coming of Christ. Mankind did not believe in God. They did not believe in His power and wisdom as set forth in the visible works of the creation. When the heavens declared His glory, men turned a deaf ear to their tale. Although the firmament shewed His handiwork, they could not see the finger of God there. Nor would man believe in the image of God, in which he himself was made. He would not believe in the oracles of God, when his conscience uttered them within him. He had so disfigured that image, and had confounded those oracles with so many discordant sounds, that he was utterly unable to separate the true from the false, and to recognize each as that which it was. And when the Son of God came upon earth with His fan in His hand to do this work for man, to declare the truth in its purity, and to manifest the perfect Image

of God, still the world would not believe in Him. Still the world cried, *This is not God ... this is not our God ... this is not such a God as we have fashioned for ourselves, of gold and jewels, of lightning and thunder, of lust and blood. This God has none of the spirit of a god. He is so meek, so gentle, so patient, so humble, so mild, so forgiving, so merciful ... there is not a great man upon earth who would not be ashamed to be like Him.* This was the sin of the world, when Christ was walking upon earth. They would not believe in Him. They would not believe that He was the Incarnate Son of God. They would not believe that the Wisdom and the Love of God had become Flesh in Him. They would not believe that the Maker of the Universe would appear in the form of a Servant. They would not believe that the Lord of all Truth and Holiness would shed his blood for the sins of mankind. So utterly estranged were they from the idea of righteousness, that, when the Sun of Righteousness was shewing forth His glory in the midst of them, they knew Him not, but denied and blasphemed Him, imputing His divine acts to the powers of evil. They listened to the corrupt imaginations of their own hearts, which had framed an image of God so totally different from the true Image made manifest in the life of Christ; and obstinately refusing to believe in Him, they plunged into the nethermost chasm of crime, and crucified the Lord, in whom they would not believe.

And as want of faith was the sin of the world before the coming of Christ, a sin the parent of all other sins, and undermining the very desire, defacing the very conception of righteousness,—as it was the sin of the world during the life of Christ, consummating itself in the attempt to destroy the great Object of Faith, to the end

that it might wallow undisturbed in all manner of falsehood, in the falsehoods of sense and selfishness, in the falsehoods of the passions and appetites, in the falsehoods of cupidity and ambition, in the falsehoods of superstition and idolatry, in the falsehoods of hypocrisy and formal observances,—so has want of faith still been the sin of the world ever since Christ went up into heaven. Still the world has not believed in Christ: still at this day it does not, will not believe in Him. Still at this day this is the great sin of mankind: and by reason of this sin all their other sins abide with them, and cleave to them, and cannot be driven out of them. And what shall we say of ourselves, brethren? Is this our sin, or no? Can we assert that we are altogether free from it? that we do indeed believe in Christ? No human judge can pronounce: but there is One who can, even He who reads the heart. He knows whether we believe in Christ, or no. To man the only evidence is, do we live by that faith? He who really believes in Christ must needs live in that faith, and by that faith; and therefore he will not live in the service of sin, but in the service of righteousness.

Here a question arises, how comes it that so large a part of the Christian world are still lying in the bondage of unbelief? in the bondage of that unbelief which makes them the slaves of sin? How comes it that the world does not burst the chains of this bondage, and clothe itself with the wings of faith, and mount through the pure region of righteousness, rejoicing in its freedom, to the foot of that throne where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God? How comes it,—may I not ask, brethren,—how comes it that, even among us who have been baptized into the name of Christ,—among us who meet together

week after week and day after day to worship the Father in His house,—among us who have so often been called to have our souls refresht and strengthened by His blessed Body and Blood,—how comes it that even among us there are so many, who . . . start not at the word . . . yes, start, ye to whom it may apply! and O that your hearts would indeed start once for all out of their fleshly sockets! . . . how comes it that even among us there are so many, who do not believe in Christ, who have no real living practical faith in Him,— so many therefore, who are still steept in their sins, who are still floundering helplessly about in the midst of their sins, even as though Christ had never come to redeem them? The reason of all this is, that the world,—that we,—have turned away from the Comforter, when He has come to convince us of the sin of not believing in Christ. Our belief in Christ, such as it is, has not been wrought in us by the Spirit of God. We believe in Christ, because our parents taught us to believe in Him, because it is our national faith, because we have been bred up in it from our childhood, because our understandings have been persuaded of His divine power by the wonderful miracles which He wrought. But what is the value of such faith, if it be no more than this? Will it take away our sins? will it clothe us in the armour of righteousness? This is a question we can easily answer, at least if it be put to us in another shape. Does it take away our sins? does it soften and fertilize our hearts, so that they bring forth the fruits of righteousness? Surely they who are conscious of having nothing beyond this traditional, conventional, historical faith, must answer, *No;* no more than the water in a bucket will refresh the whole country when parcht with a long drouth. The water

which is to refresh a land parcht with drouth, must come from above. The faith which is to refresh and renew a soul dry and parcht through a long continuance in sin, must come from above also. Until we have been convinced by the Spirit of the sin of unbelief, we shall never know the hallowing power of faith. Until we are convinced of sin, for not believing in Christ, we cannot be convinced of righteousness, because Christ is gone to the Father.

As the sin, of which the Comforter came to convince the world, is of a totally different kind from everything that the world calls sin,—as it is a sin which the world, so long as it was left to itself, never dreamt of as such, nor does any heart, left to itself, so regard it,—while yet it is the one great all-in-all of sin, the sin by which men are cut off and utterly estranged from God, the sin through which they grow downward toward hell, instead of growing upward toward heaven,—so on the other hand is the righteousness, of which the Comforter came to convince the world, totally different in kind from everything that the world accounts righteousness,—a righteousness such as the world in the highest raptures of its imagination never dreamt of, a righteousness moreover by which the effect of sin is done away, and man, hitherto cut off and estranged from God, is reunited and set at one with Him. *The Comforter will convince the world of righteousness*, our Lord says, *because I go to the Father, and ye see Me no more.* In these words we perceive what is the righteousness, of which the Comforter came to convince the world. Not of its own righteousness: one might as fitly convince a cavern at midnight of light. The Comforter is the Spirit of Truth, and can only convince of the truth. But

the world's righteousness is a lie, hollow as a whited sepulcre, tawdry as a puppet in a show. Different opinions have been maintained on the question, of whose righteousness the Comforter was to convince the world (T); but to my own mind the words which follow seem to settle the point: *He will convince the world of righteousness, because I go to the Father.* Of whose righteousness? Not of the world's assuredly. Christ's going to the Father could no way be a proof of the righteousness of the world. On the contrary it was the fullest, completest, most damnatory of all proofs of the world's unrighteousness and iniquity. It was the proof, that Him, whom the world condemned, God justified,—that the Stone, which the builders rejected, God made the Headstone of the corner,—that Him, whom the world had lifted up on high on a cross of shame, God lifted up on high to a throne of glory in the heavens,—that Him, whom the world cast out, nailing Him between two thieves, God took to Himself, and set Him in the heavenly places far above all principality and power,—yea, took Him up into Himself, into the Unity of His Eternal Godhead, between Himself and His Holy Spirit. Never was the righteousness of the world so confounded and set at nought, as when Christ went to the Father, when He, to whom Barabbas was preferred, was thus shewn to be the beloved Son and perfect Image of the Allholy, Allrighteous God.

But while Christ's going to the Father was a proof of the unrighteousness and desperate wickedness of the world, it was also a proof of righteousness, namely of His own pure and perfect and spotless righteousness. It was a proof that He was the Holy One who could not see corruption. It was a proof that He could not possibly

be holden by death, any more than it would be possible to hold the sun by a chain of darkness; and therefore that, as Death, the ghastly shadow which ever follows inseparably at the heels of Sin, fled from His presence, He must needs be also without sin. It was a proof that, while the world *desired a murderer to be granted to them*, He whom they *denied* was *the Holy One and the Just.* The effect of sin from the beginning, the effect which it always had wrought and always must work, was to cut man off from God, to throw a great gulf between man and God, which no man, continuing in the weakness and under the bondage of sin, can ever pass over. It had made man blind to the sight of God, and deaf to the voice of God. It had driven him out from the garden of Eden, that is, from the presence of God: for none but the pure in heart can see God; none but the righteous can dwell with God. Therefore, when Christ went to His Father, when He was taken up into heaven to live in the bosom of God, this of itself was a proof that He, who was thus exalted, must have fulfilled all righteousness; that His righteousness was not like the righteousness of men, speckled and spotted, and covered with scratches and rents, like a sheet of old blotting-paper, but pure, and without stain or spot. This then was the righteousness, of which the Comforter came to convince the world, the righteousness of Him in whom the world would not believe, of Him whom the world had crucified. Pilate had found no fault in Him; yet Pilate had delivered Him up to be crucified. The Jews had been unable to charge Him with any fault; yet the Jews had crucified Him. They saw nothing but the hideous mists and phantoms of their own passions, of their own envy and hatred and

malice: they clothed Jesus in the dark hues of those passions; and then they nailed Him to the cross. Not knowing what righteousness was, they could not recognize it when it came and stood in a visible form before them. Loving unrighteousness rather than righteousness, they tried to quench the light of righteousness, and could not find rest until they trusted they had built up a thick firmament of darkness around them, and extinguisht the heavenly ray which God had sent through the darkness to scatter it.

Hence, because the world thus obstinately refused to believe in the righteousness of Christ, was it needful that the Comforter should come to convince the world thereof; so that He might *be declared with power to be the Son of God, according to the Spirit of Holiness*, which was thus manifested to be in Him, *by His resurrection from the dead;* and that this declaration might be made known *to all nations*, to bring them *to the obedience of faith in His name.* Here however the same question crosses us, which crost us at the end of the last sermon: how could He, who came to convince the world of the righteousness of Christ, be rightly called the Comforter, at least with reference to this portion of His work? At other times, when exercising His power for other purposes, He might shew Himself to be a Comforter: but what comfort could there be in His convincing the world of that, which was the sure judicial proof of the unutterable crime it had been guilty of? At first thought it would seem as if the conviction of Christ's righteousness could only bring shame and confusion on those by whom He was crucified. And even to us, — although we were not present in the body at His crucifixion, and so far

were not guilty of it,—although we did not lift up our voices and join in the murderous cry of the Jews,—still, if the righteousness of Christ were nothing more than His own righteousness, the contemplation of such a perfect pattern of all that is excellent and pure and holy would rather seem fitted to cast us down in utter hopelessness, than to comfort us, at least at the moment when the conviction of our own exceeding sinfulness has just been brought home in full force to our souls. It might rather tempt us to exclaim with Peter, *Depart from us; for we are sinful men, O Lord.* Nevertheless, as our Lord tells us, it is indeed the Comforter,—nor is the name used here without its appropriate force,—who convinces us of the righteousness of Christ. For why? Christ's righteousness is also our righteousness, if we will cast away the sin of not believing in Him, and receive His righteousness as our own by faith. He is *the Lord our Righteousness.* He did not come down to earth to lead a holy and righteous life for His own sake. He was all holiness and all righteousness from the beginning, yea, from all eternity, dwelling in the bosom of the Father, full of grace and truth. But He came down to earth to lead a holy and righteous life for our sakes, in order that we might become sharers in His righteousness, and that so He might raise us along with Himself to His Father and ours. It was for us that He was born: for us He went about doing good patiently and unweariedly in spite of hatred and scorn and persecution: for us He bore all the hardships and crosses of life: it was for us that He bowed His allholy neck, and entered through the gates of time and space into the form of weak and frail humanity: for us He submitted to be

tempted: for us He overcame sin: for us He allowed the shadow of death to flit over His eternal spirit: for us He burst the bonds of death, and rose again from the grave, for our justification, for our righteousness, that we might believe in Him, and might become righteous thereby: it was for us too that He went up openly to His Father, and sent His Holy Spirit to convince us of His righteousness: for us also does He ever sit, the Sun of Righteousness, in the heavens. When the sun rises to convince the world of light, he does not keep his light to himself: he does not journey through the sky merely to convince the world that he himself is light. He sheds his light abroad on all that will unfold themselves to receive it: he pours it into them, that they may have it in themselves, and manifest it to each other, and behold it in each other. So too does the Sun of Righteousness. His Righteousness spreads from the east to the west: it fills the heavens, and covers the earth. On all who will open their hearts to receive it, He sheds it: for their sakes He gained it; and He pours it out abundantly upon them.

Therefore is the Spirit, who convinces the world of the righteousness of Christ, most truly called the Comforter. In convincing us of sin, we saw, He convinces us that we are dead in trespasses and sins,—dead, so that we lie in them as in a grave, utterly unable to raise ourselves out of them,—so that our souls, were they left to themselves, would rot and crumble and fall to pieces. Hence this conviction, if it stood alone, would be full of sorrow and dismay. If the Spirit merely convinced us of our sinful acts, of our vices, of our crimes, He would not be the Comforter. For they have so coiled

round every part of our being, and mixt themselves up with our very heart's blood, that we cannot shake them, or strip them, or even flay them off. But in convincing us that our prime sin, the root and spring of all our sins, is want of faith, He lets in a gleam of light; He enables us to perceive an outlet; He kindles a hope in us that, if we can but believe, the sinfulness of our nature may be subdued. We are no longer doomed to a vain struggle between a conscience muttering more and more faintly, *Sin not*, and a carnal heart shouting more and more imperiously, *I will sin*. We are taught that there is One who will help us through this struggle, if we will but believe in Him, even the Onlybegotten Son of God, who dwelt upon earth for the very purpose of breathing a new life of faith into us, of setting a living Object of faith before us; so that in every need and peril, whithersoever the chances of the world may waft us, we shall see God, not afar off in the heavens, in the clouds of speculation, or the dim twilight of tradition, but close by our side, as our Example, our Guide, our Friend, our Brother, our Saviour and Redeemer; that we shall know God, not merely as a Lawgiver, commanding us to overcome sin, but as a Pattern shewing us that it can be overcome, and how, and as a mighty Helper ever ready to enable us to overcome it. In like manner, if the conviction of righteousness which the Spirit works in us were merely the conviction of God's righteousness, or of Christ's, we could only fall to the ground with awestruck palsied hearts: we could no more venture to look upon Christ, than the naked eye can look upon the sun. But when we are thoroughly convinced that Christ's righteousness is our righteousness, the righteousness which He purposes to

bestow upon mankind,—that He came to fulfill all righteousness, not for His own sake, but for ours, in order that He might give us all that we lack out of His exceeding abundance,—then indeed a bright ray of joy and comfort darts through the heart, startling the frostbound waters out of their yearlong sleep. Then the soul, which before was as a wilderness and a solitary place, solitary, because God was far from it,—yea, the barren desert of the heart rejoices and blossoms like the rose. All its hidden powers, all its supprest feelings, so long smothered by the unresisted blasts of the world, unfold like the roseleaves before the Sun of Righteousness; and each and all are filled and transpierced with His gladdening beautifying light.

In order however that this may be fulfilled in us, the conviction of Christ's righteousness must indeed be wrought in us by the Spirit of God. We must be thoroughly convinced that He is *our Righteousness*, our only Righteousness. It is not enough to believe that He was a very good and holy man. We believe that many men have been good and holy, that Noah was so, that Abraham was so, that Joseph was so, that St John was so, that St Paul was so. But their righteousness is of no avail to us: it cannot help us out of our sins. Therefore our conviction of Christ's righteousness must be of a wholly different kind from our belief in the righteousness of any other man. On the other hand it must be of a different kind from our conviction of the righteousness or justice of God: for this, coming upon the conviction of our sins, would merely affix the deathwarrant to the condemnation which our conscience pronounces against us. Whereas the belief in the righteousness of Christ is the means

by which we are to be raised out of our sins, and to receive justification in the sight of God. Hence these two works of the Comforter, the conviction of our own sins, and the conviction of Christ's righteousness, go one along with the other, and cannot be divorced or parted, neither being accomplishable without the other. For it is by the contrast of Christ's righteousness that we are enabled most clearly to discern our own allpervading sinfulness; and it is by the conviction of our own sinfulness that we are brought to recognize the divine perfection, and our own need of the righteousness of Christ. In some souls one work may seem to be prior, in others the other. According as we turn our eyes, the light may seem to rush upon the darkness, or the darkness to fly before the light; while the two operations are in fact coinstantaneous. But whichever conviction may have been, or have come forward into consciousness as the earliest in any particular case, each must be continually enlivening and strengthening the other. There are those who are sinking like Luther under a crushing sense of sin, before the assurance of the forgiveness obtained by the righteousness of Christ dawns upon them. There are those to whom Christ will manifest Himself in the first instance, as He did to St Paul, in His heavenly glory. But in either case, where the work is the work of the Comforter, the second conviction will follow close upon the first. The conviction of sin will be followed by the conviction of the forgiveness which our Allrighteous Saviour has procured for us; which latter conviction alone turns the former into a wholesome discipline of humility: and when Christ vouchsafes to arouse us by manifesting Himself in His glory, it is still as He whom we have *persecuted* by our sins. The conviction of Christ's righteousness

will ever be one of the chief means employed by the Comforter to bring us to a conviction of our sinfulness; while on the other hand it is absolutely necessary that we should be brought to this conviction of our sinfulness, before we can discern our need of a righteousness, which is not our own, but is to descend upon us from above. So long as a man is not convinced of sin, of his own sinfulness irremediable by any efforts of his own,—so long as he is not convinced that he has no real righteousness in himself, that he is not what he ought to be, nay, that he is totally unlike what he ought to be, —so long as he is content to live the common, amphibious, half and half life of the world, which is neither one thing nor the other, a miserable border-land between good and evil,—so long as he goes on staggering to and fro between opposite sins, neither hot nor cold, believing with his lips, and unbelieving in his heart, doing right for the sake of the world, wearing the garb of outward decency and a self-satisfied honesty or honorableness,—so long he can never be really convinced of the righteousness of Christ. We must feel that without Him we can do nothing; that through our sins we have cast ourselves out from the presence of God; and that of ourselves we can no more return into His presence, than we can fly up and bathe in the fountains of light which are ever welling from the heart of the sun: we must feel that the Law is placed, like the flaming sword at the East of the Garden of Eden, *turning every way*, writing its sentence of condemnation against every deed and word that issues from the heart of man, and thus *keeping the way of the tree of life:* we must feel that we neither have nor can have any righteousness of ourselves to justify ourselves: then alone

shall we be brought to yearn for, then alone shall we indeed be convinced by the Comforter of the righteousness of Christ.

And how are we to become partakers of that righteousness? Christ is ready, is desirous to bestow it upon all; but how are we to receive it? Even as we receive every other heavenly gift, by faith. *The Comforter shall convince the world of righteousness*, says our Lord, *because I go to the Father, and ye see Me no more.* In that He went to the Father, He gave the most certain demonstration of His righteousness: in that we see Him no more, He renders it easier for us to make His righteousness ours. Were He still living upon earth, were He walking about before our eyes, it would not be so. It was not so with His brethren: they did not believe in Him. It was not so with His chosen apostles: so long as He continued present with them in the body, they did not receive Him into their souls; they did not put on His righteousness. Therefore was it expedient for them, as we have already seen, that He should go away. For so long as He continued with them, they lived by sight, rather than by faith; and sight disturbs faith, and shakes it, and weakens it. Sight, as belonging to the world of sense, partakes its frailties and imperfections. To put forth all its power, faith must be purely and wholly faith. It is so even with the human objects of our faith and love. So long as they continue in the flesh, our faith in them, our love for them is imperfect. The infirmities of the flesh cleave to it. Their corruption must put on incorruption,—they must be transfigured by death,—they must pass away from this world of sight,—we must see them no more;—then may our faith and love toward them become pure

and holy and heavenly and imperishable. When our love springs from the root of faith, then alone may it hope to blossom through eternity. In like manner, when our righteousness springs from the root of faith, then will it flourish in the courts of the temple of God. For what is our righteousness, when it comes to us through faith? It is not ours, but Christ's: and everything that is Christ's is wellpleasing in the eyes of God. By faith we pass out of this world of sense. By faith we put off our carnal nature, and put on a new spiritual nature, through which we shall not be found naked. By faith we receive the power to cast away our sins, and to live a life of holiness and love. Through faith, giving ear to the voice of the Comforter, the evil spirit is driven out of us, as he was driven by the harp of David out of Saul. Through faith we are lifted out of ourselves. Through faith we cease to be specks of foam, dasht along the furrows of the homeless wave. Through faith we become members of the everlasting body of Christ; the Spirit of Christ passes into us; and thus in the fulness of time we too shall go with Him to His Father.

SERMON IV.

THE CONVICTION OF JUDGEMENT.

JOHN xvi. 8, 11.

When the Comforter is come, He will convince the world of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgement; of Judgement, because the Prince of this world is judged.

WE have considered the first two parts of the threefold work of the Comforter; the conviction of sin, which He was to effect in a world lying blindly and recklessly in sin; and the conviction of righteousness, which He was to awaken by opening the eyes of that world to behold the righteousness of the Lord it had crucified; the conviction of the world's sin, and of Christ's righteousness. These two acts, we have seen, as wrought in the world, are essentially coincident; the conviction of sin being the instantaneous result from the manifestation of the righteousness of Christ, even as the rising of the light manifests the darkness. Were there no darkness, the light would only manifest itself; but as the world, at the time when the Comforter was first sent to bring it to the knowledge of the truth, was lying wholly under thick darkness, the effect which the dawning light of the Sun of Righteousness was to produce upon it, could not be other in the first instance than the conviction of the darkness under which it was lying. It was to be convinced of sin, of the

sinfulness which ran through all its thoughts and feelings, and with which the very notions it had framed of anything approaching to righteousness were tainted, before it could adequately understand the beauty and the glory of that perfect righteousness which the Son of God had manifested upon earth. In these days on the other hand, when we are brought into the Church of Christ in our infancy,—when the name of Jesus is one of the first words the child is taught to utter,—when our earliest lessons of obedience and patience and meekness and purity and mercy and love are taken from the story of His life,—when we are bred up in the constant habit of joining the congregation of our brethren to offer up our prayers to God as His children, reconciled to Him through the righteousness of His Onlybegotten Son,—when, whithersoever we go, we find the name of Christ written on every ancient institution, and the house of God and of His Christ rising out of every town and every hamlet, to bear our hearts "Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot, Which men call earth,"—now, when, if we cast our eyes over the map of the earth, we see at once that Christ is the recognized Lord of every nation eminent in knowledge and in power,—it might be supposed that the first impression which would be graven on every youthful heart, would be the image of Christ, of the Lord its Righteousness; and that so, by degrees, as its consciousness became livelier and more distinct, it would be taught by the contrast of this glorious image to feel its own unworthiness and sinfulness. Nor do I doubt that there are many, the growth of whose spiritual life does in fact proceed in this calmer, more orderly manner, — many, especially in that sex which is less exposed to the assault

of the world's tumultuous temptations, who are led by the Spirit of God from grace to grace, even as a child is led by its mother, and who are only allowed to fall, as a child falls, lightly, hurting itself but little, just enough to serve for a warning, and soon lifted up again. I doubt not that there are many children of godly parents, on whose souls the conviction of Christ's righteousness is stampt early, becoming more and more distinct and bright as they advance in years, and gradually impressing them with the conviction of their own sinfulness. Only, until it has done this, until we are indeed convinced of sin, our conviction of Christ's righteousness can never be what it ought to be. We cannot feel its divine exclusive perfection: we cannot feel how totally different it is from the righteousness of all the other children of men,—how opposite in its principles and aims to that virtue which the natural man, when highly gifted and favorably circumstanced, will sometimes admire and seek after,—how immeasurably superior to what has ever been found even in the holiest of His saints. Nor, until we are convinced of sin, can we feel our own need of being justified by the righteousness of Christ: we cannot understand what is most excellent and wonderful in it, that it was not earned for Himself, but for us, in order that He might have wherewith to clothe a race shivering and pining in the nakedness of their sins. And so we shall merely endeavour to imitate it, as we might imitate the actions of any other great and good man, as something lying within our reach, attainable by our own efforts: we shall not seek it as a gift, as something that we cannot possess except through the bountiful mercy of its sole Possessor: we shall not fall down in humble and contrite prayer,

yearning to have our hearts and souls renewed and strengthened, as alone they can be, by a participation in His Spirit.

But though there may be examples in which the Christian life is undisturbed by violent shocks, and rises to its maturity without going through any convulsive crisis,—though it may now and then flow onward, fed and increast, like a river, by the whole country it has to pass through, and never compelled to burst its way among the rocks of a rapid, or to plunge down at once into a different level,—and though the number of such examples would doubtless be greatly enlarged, if a higher spirit of sanctity were to spread over our domestic life, and to animate our domestic education, and if at our schools and universities it were borne more steadily in mind that the main business of Christian education is to train up the children of God for their inheritance in the kingdom of heaven,—yet, according to the present course of the world, and the present constitution and character of society, such persons at the utmost cannot amount to more than a very small minority. Most of you will bear me witness that in the great majority of cases the world still rushes with overwhelming force upon the soul, and sweeps it away out of its baptismal purity, and dashes it to and fro with the swelling of its riotous waves. Most of you will be ready to confess that the righteousness of Christ has not shone with a never-waning ever-waxing light upon your souls from your childhood upward,—that it has often been hid from you by the mists and vapours of earth,—that it had no place in the mimic heaven, which you patcht up for yourselves out of the blossoms and jewels and spangles of this world, and beneath which you lulled yourselves to sleep with

sweet songs of your own graces and virtues. Nay, are there not those amongst you, who, if you were to lay bare your hearts, would have to avow that you have turned wilfully away from Christ and His righteousness, — that you have driven the thought of it out of your minds,— that you have closed your ears against Him, when He has called upon you to acknowledge your want of it, and to receive a full supply of that and every other want from Him? are there not those who have shrunk away from Him into some of the dark caverns of sin, lest His light should dazzle and blind, lest His voice should trouble and scare you? Many of you, I feel assured, would be constrained to acknowledge that there have been long periods of your life, during which you have never seen, never contemplated, never meditated upon the righteousness of Christ,—during which you have thought of no other righteousness, have cared for no other righteousness, have aimed at no other righteousness, than that which is fair and grand in the eyes of the world. And how does the case stand now, brethren? Do you indeed all discern the righteousness of Christ in its heavenly perfection and beatific glory? Do you look up to it, and gaze upon it with every eye of your heart and soul and mind, and strive after it, strive to make it yours, with all your strength, with all the strength of watchfulness against temptation, with all the strength of a resolute resistance to evil, with all the strength of a patient perseverance in welldoing, with all the strength of humble penitent earnest unwearriable prayer? Is this the one great object of your desires and aspirations and endeavours, the beacon that draws and guides you onward, and the tent that shelters and protects you? Are you longing, seeking, striving

to fly for refuge from the sins of the world beneath the righteousness of Christ? Are you indeed hungering and thirsting after this righteousness? Or have you bowed down your souls to the world, and given up your hearts to its service? with no higher ambition, than to snatch all you can of the largess which the world is ever and anon flinging abroad among the crowd of her slaves, in order to cheer and kindle them up for a moment, and to keep them from fainting and flagging? Is this your highest aim, to look well in the eyes of the world, to gain worldly power, worldly riches, worldly distinction, worldly honour, worldly esteem, worldly righteousness? Surely, brethren, if this be our case, if this be the case with any of us,—and may we not reasonably fear that it is the case with far too many? let us each ask whether it be with ourselves;—for, if it be, we must need to be convinced of judgement; we must grievously need a living conviction that the Prince of this world has been judged.

This is the third great work of the Comforter; who, according to our Lord's declaration, was not only to convince the world of sin and of righteousness, but also of judgement. We have seen in the former sermons, how absolutely necessary it was, that, if the world was indeed to be convinced of sin and of righteousness, the Holy Spirit of God should vouchsafe to undertake the work of bringing the world to that conviction. We have seen how utterly inefficient all other powers are to engrave this conviction on the heart of the world; how every other attempt so to engrave it was like carving characters in the sand, which the next wave of temptation covered and effaced; how it was requisite that the world should have

a new heart and a new spirit, even the Spirit of God, working in it, before it could embrace and retain a conviction so utterly alien to its nature. Nor was the difficulty of convincing the world of judgement less; nor was there less need that the Spirit of God should graciously undertake the work of producing this conviction. For by no other power than that of the Spirit of God could it be wrought; yet, unless it were wrought, the work of the Comforter would be incomplete. In vain would He convince the world of sin; in vain would He convince the world of righteousness; unless He perfected His work by convincing the world of judgement.

It is by the light of the Sun of Righteousness, we have found, that the Comforter convinces the world of sin. Some souls may be the most strongly imprest in the first instance by the beauty and glory of the righteousness manifested in the life of Christ, and may only be awakened by degrees to the consciousness of their own want of everything akin thereto. Others, a far greater number,—especially among those who are sent out from the quiet shelter of their homes to fight the world upon its own ground,—become immerst in such thick darkness, darkness like that which spread over the land of Egypt, darkness which may be felt,—they become so bound by the heavy chains of a morbid and turbid sleep,—that the first sound which strikes their consciences, when they are startled out of that sleep, is the clanking of their chains,—the first sensation they are distinctly aware of is the weight of the darkness pressing stiflingly upon them. Now, whichever the order of succession may be, if the conviction wrought in us be the work of the Comforter, the same effect, which took place in the natural

world, when the Creative Word poured light through the dark and formless void, took place also, and still takes place, in the moral world, when the same Word pours His light through it. The Spirit of God divides the light from the darkness, and calls the light Righteousness; and the darkness He calls Sin. But is this all? Is He content with merely dividing them, with merely giving them their names, and leaving them to stand arrayed over against each other? Is He so weak, that He can do no more than this? or so indifferent, that He will not do more? Is the light content with dividing itself from the darkness? Does it allow the darkness to lift up its head against it? Does it not utterly scatter the darkness, and drive it away before its face? They who are hidden from the light by the thick impermeable mass of the earth, will still be in darkness: but whithersoever the light comes, thence does the darkness fly. And must it not be so likewise, when the Son of God sends His Spirit from heaven, to shew forth the light of His righteousness, and to convince the world of the darkness of its sin? Assuredly it must. The manifestation of Christ's righteousness is not merely in order to reveal the sin of the world, but in order to scatter and confound it and drive it away. When He came forth from the bosom of the Father, to war against Sin, He did not come to the end that the victory should be doubtful; He did not come to share the empire of the world with Satan. He came to overthrow Satan; yea, and He did overthrow him. He came to cast out sin; yea, and He did cast it out. From His own humanity He cast it out, and waved His sword of light before it, whenever it dared approach Him: and hereby He gave a pledge that it shall be cast

out from the souls of all His saints, of all who shall become partakers of His blessed and glorious redemption.

This is the great truth, of which the Comforter came to convince the world, when He came to convince it of judgement; and this again is a truth of which no other power can convince it. Or is there any other power that can? The word Judgement naturally reminds us of that power by which the rulers of states in all ages have endeavoured to convince the people thereof. Law is the voice whereby the wisdom of those who are set in authority over nations has tried from the beginning to convince mankind of judgement. It is a solemn voice, direct, imperative, oracular, mighty among the voices of the earth, girt with majesty and with terrour, speaking like thunder, and executing its sentence like lightning. The wisdom of nations is employed in devising and enacting laws: the wisdom of nations is employed in administering and enforcing them: the power of nations is pledged to carry them into execution; and fearful are the weapons which that power has to wield, dungeons, chains, exile from the land of our fathers, the severance of every tie that renders life precious or pleasant, death. Such is the plan which man takes to convince his fellows of judgement: and how vain is it! Against how small a portion of the brood of sin can Law even utter judgement! Only against gross overt acts of sin; against such acts as break the public peace, or seriously injure the wellbeing of others. So far therefore as Law goes, there are vast multitudes of sins, against which no sentence even of reprobation is denounced; how vast, you will better conceive, if you reflect how much of your own past lives has been sinful, yet how seldom, if ever, you have done anything of which

the law could have had cognizance. Moreover, even among those sins which Law forbids, how few comparatively are the acts against which judgement takes effect! The act must be outrageous; the evidence of its commission must be clear, satisfactory, unimpeachable, without flaw or loophole. The carelessness and apathy of those against whom the offense is committed, their shrinking from appearing in the character of prosecutors and calling down wrath upon their brethren,—the skill and subtilty of advocates,—the mildness of judges, bound by their very office to give the accused the benefit of the slightest doubt, the faintest presumption,—the natural sympathy which man feels with suffering, even where it is the consequence of guilt, and which, in an effeminate age, when men have lost the idea of the rightful connexion and proportion between moral and physical evil, so as to shudder at pain more sensitively than at sin, threatens almost to paralyse the arm of justice,—the reluctance to condemn a fellowcreature, which the consciousness of our own frailty begets, and which is strongest in the purest hearts, —all these motives combine to screen culprits, even those whose crimes have been flagrant, from the judgement of Law. How rarely has a law been repealed or fallen into disuse, because it had fulfilled its purpose, and the crime it forbad had ceast to be committed! When laws have become obsolete, it has been much rather from changes in the condition and habits of society, than from their own efficiency. On the other hand how glaringly is the incapacity of Law to convince the world of judgement demonstrated by the continual multiplication of laws! In reckless defiance of Law, new crimes are invented, and the old ones are still perpetrated as frequently as ever. Nay,

unless a far mightier, more pervading and penetrative power than that of Law were employed to convince the world of judgement, you might enact law after law to repress the fraud and violence of man, you might weave a net of laws around him to tame him, you might twine your threads fast and tight and thick about every limb; and just as you had finisht your task, he would crumble to dust from rottenness and corruption.

Law however is not a voice which often sounds in your ears, my brethren, to convince you of judgement. The sins and offenses which Law forbids, are not those into which you are likely to fall. Why so? Because you are convinced of judgement? If you were, you would be no less unlikely to fall into other sins, than into those which the law condemns. But you have few temptations to commit the latter. The sins which the law brands are mostly offenses against the institutions, the order and peace of society; and your interests are bound up with those institutions, and that order and peace. Therefore you are not apt to commit such sins, and need not the reprobation of the law to repell you from them. But the world has other voices whereby men are to be convinced of judgement, voices addrest more especially to you. The law, properly so called, the law of the state is addrest mainly to other classes of society: the law of honour, the law of opinion are addrest to you. Now these in some respects have been more effective than the law of the state in convincing the world of judgement: they have at times succeeded in checking and repressing certain sins; some they have almost extirpated. Yet it can by no means be said even of these, that they do indeed convince the

world of judgement. For what is the judgement, of which they convince the world? Not the judgement of God, but the judgement of the world itself. Hereby they foster and pamper the sin of worshiping the world, instead of God; a sin which seems to become huger and more oppressive with the increase of civilization. The motive they appeal to is the desire of pleasing the world, not of pleasing God. He who rules his conduct solely by the laws of honour and of opinion, will be just as careless about God, just as remote from the righteousness of Christ, as the most barefaced sinner. These laws do not point straightforward along the path of duty: they say not, *This is right; do and love it: This is wrong; eschew and abhor it.* They say, *This will exalt thee in the esteem of thy neighbours: This will brand thee with shame and ignominy.* Moreover, as the grounds of these laws are erroneous, and their motives spurious and tainted with evil, so, in that which they enjoin and forbid, they are arbitrary, partial, superficial, fallacious. Much that is sinful they encourage. Looking in all things at that which displays itself to the eyes of man, they leave the recesses of the heart unexplored and untoucht; so that the more a man conforms to them, the more apt is he to become a whited sepulcre. Nay, there is one large class of sins, of which they are wellnigh regardless,—those most insidious and pernicious sins, with which human morality has ever been at a loss how to deal, the sins of impurity and licentiousness. To such vices they are lenient and indulgent, except when they become excessive. Hereby these laws at once betray their inability to convince the world of judgement, in that they do not presume to condemn the sin itself, in all its forms and

indications, but only when it becomes an open outrage, destructive of happiness, and undermining the foundations of family life.

Thus impotent are the witnesses of this world to convince the world of judgement. Nor had the witnesses appointed by God for the purpose in the earlier ages of the world been able to produce this conviction efficaciously. From the very first God had set the mark of judgement upon sin. Ere Death was, ere Sin had sprung up in the heart of man, God had declared that Death should execute judgement against Sin. What death was to be, man knew not: its dark shadow had never yet past over the bright vernal face of paradisiacal life. He only knew that it was something to be greatly feared and shunned, something betokening God's severe displeasure, and that it was to be the consequence and penalty of disobedience. Yet death did not convince man of judgement in the days before it entered into the world: nor has it ever done so since. Although this judgement against sin has been executed in countless millions of instances, ever since man sold himself into the bondage of sin,—although Death has pursued him whithersoever he has wandered, into every nook and corner of the earth, and has never allowed him to evade its clutches,—although the whole earth is one vast charnelhouse in which Death has laid up the victims of Sin,—although no minute of time glides by without tolling the death of some among the children of men,—still man will not believe that death has been appointed by God as a judgement against sin. He will not look upon it as such. He deems that it is merely a law of nature; as in truth it is, a law of our sinful nature, a law to which all such as are concluded under sin must bow. But he

will not recognize the connexion between death and sin. He feels indeed that sin is a law of his nature, that there is a law in his members, which he cannot withstand, dragging him into sin; and this he will often alledge, more especially to his own conscience, as an excuse for continuing unresistingly in sin; although at other times, when the spirit of pride has for the moment supplanted the spirit of sloth, he will be ready to boast of the strength and dignity and virtuous energies of his nature. He knows too that death is a law of his nature; and this he never thinks of denying or questioning: nay, he is prone to believe the whisperings of the deceiver, who tells him that so it ever has been, and so it ever will and must be,—that to wrestle against it is vain,—that to trouble oneself about it is unprofitable selftormenting,—that we must let it be, as though it were not,—that we must copy the example of Nature, who hastens to efface every trace of death's hand, and who, with the seeds of death rankling in every limb, decks herself out with the pageant of exuberant unquenchable life, and makes use of the exuviæ of death to render that life more luxuriant,—and that, whatever may come after death, we must deem of it as a nonentity; for that no power can conquer death on this side of the grave, and still less beyond. Thus, although Death has been ordained to pass to and fro over the whole earth, stalking from land to land, and from city to city, and from house to house, knocking time after time with sorrow and piteous wailing at the door of every heart,—and although it has not gone forth alone, but accompanied by a thronging train of pains and diseases, blighting the bloom of youth, blasting the strength of manhood, gnawing at the core of old age, and bringing

one after another down into the all-leveling grave,—although moreover it sends forth the whole host of physical evils whereby the world is desolated, to keep man in mind of wrath,—although this countless multitude of witnesses is ever traversing the earth, with sounds of lamentation and tribulation and anguish, to convince the world of judgement,—still all is in vain, the world will not be convinced. Man will not believe that death and pain and sickness and misery are the offspring of sin: he will not believe that sin must produce this, and can produce no other offspring. Or even if he is led to discern the general connexion between sin and misery, still he will not believe that this connexion is necessary and indissoluble. He listens greedily to the words of the Tempter, who tells him that in his case the connexion shall be violated, that, in special indulgence to him, this adamantine chain of moral gravitation, more lasting and binding than that by which the stars are held in their spheres, will snap; that sin for him will wholly change its nature; that he shall find nothing but pleasures and raptures in it, and nothing but weariness and vexation apart from it; that at his approach the flames of hell will turn into a garden of delights, while Eden would shrivel into a wilderness the moment he set foot there.

I will not enter into details for the sake of pointing out how vain all forms of misery have ever been to convince the world of judgement. It is needless. You can hardly walk along the streets of a great city without seeing swarms rushing eagerly in chase of sin, although shame and scorn and outcastness and destitution and disease and death are glaring with fixt eyes upon them. The first man born after the expulsion of our first parents out

of Paradise became a murderer, and dragged death into the world, as though it were lagging too long to execute God's judgement against sin. He who had preacht righteousness to the generation before the Flood,—he who had beheld that whole generation with every work of its hands swept away, — he who had floated suspended between earth and heaven, the head of the one sole family spared from the universal destruction, while the waters of judgement were rushing whelmingly around him,—he who had thus witnest this awful manifestation of God's twofold judgement, of wrath against sin and of mercy to righteousness,—even he, we read, fell into the snares of sin, and yielded his soul to the lusts of that world, which he had seen turned by sin into a ghastly wreck: and among the seven souls who were preserved along with him, one brought down a father's curse upon his head. A like testimony has ever been borne by times of great desolating calamity, as when a famine or a pestilence has been let loose to prey upon a people: for while they who have already been convinced of judgement, are stirred at such seasons to a still deeper seriousness of thought and strictness of life and earnestness of devotion, on the other hand the near approach of danger seems rather to render the children of this world more reckless, and to unkennel the fierce lusts and devouring passions, which selfish fears and shame had previously lockt up in the dark places of their hearts (U). Thus again it is notorious that a public execution is mostly a scene of fresh crime; and that, when a ship is wreckt, many of the wretched men who are about to be swallowed up by the waves, will spend their few remaining moments in maddening drunkenness and plunder and licentiousness. So utterly

inefficient is wrath and every mode of selfish fear to convince mankind of judgement. If man had nothing but the terrours of this world and the prospect of death to act upon him, then, the nearer those terrours came, the louder and more general would be the shout, *Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die.* And although Tragedy makes it her special business to convince the world of judgement, by setting forth the fated and inevitable doom which sin brings down upon its head, Comedy bears witness how transient such impressions are, how soon they are laught away, how readily and merrily men will rush down the precipice, at the foot of which their brethren are lying crusht before their eyes. Nor are the solemn lessons which History reads from the records of all ages more effective: we only learn them by rote, and repeat them to our posterity, with the confirmation of our own examples.

Nor did the Law of God, with all the infallible curses attacht to it, produce the conviction of judgement. Even while it was delivered on the mount amid thunders and lightnings, the people at the foot of the mount were turning away from the God who was declaring His holy will to them, and were defiling their souls before His face with new idolatrous abominations. So too did their children continue to do. In their earlier ages the Israelites were perpetually forsaking Jehovah and His law, to worship the false gods of the heathens. In their latter ages they made the Law itself an object of mere idolatry, pampering their carnal pride by a precise observance of the letter, while they were careless about the spirit. And though God sent His prophets, voice after voice, wave after wave of sound, rolling with a melancholy moan through the moral wilderness of Judea, — though they

lifted up their voices, and cried to the heavens and the earth to give ear, and hear the woes which God had denounced against sin,—still Israel would not hear, His people would not consider. So that in this instance again we find an absolute need and necessity that the Spirit of God should come down from heaven to work the conviction, which no other power could work.

The Comforter will convince the world of judgement. We have seen how He convinces the world, how He convinces each individual soul, of the sin of not believing in Christ; and how He leads us to cast away that sin, whereby we were cut off from God and all goodness, to give up our hearts to faith, to believe, and to find a power in our faith which will deliver us from ourselves and from sin. We have seen how He convinces the world, and each individual soul, of Christ's righteousness; how He convinces us that Christ, in that He went to His Father, manifested Himself to be the Lord our Righteousness; and how He leads us to seek to be clothed in the righteousness which Christ has obtained for us. Now this, it might be thought, must be enough. The whole work of God, the whole work of the Spirit for the completion of Christ's work and the salvation of mankind, might seem to be fulfilled. When we are clothed in Christ's righteousness, what more can be desired? what more can be done for the soul, which is arrayed in the pure and spotless robe of the Lamb? Nothing; provided it were to pass at once out of the prison of the flesh; provided death were to come to it, and bear it aloft from the temptations and struggles of this world to the abode of everlasting calmness and peace. In most cases however this is not so. In most cases, even after the soul has

been convinced of sin and of righteousness, and has been clothed anew in the righteousness of faith, it is still doomed to live on in a world of frailty, surrounded and assailed by all manner of temptations, to feel the lustings of the flesh against the Spirit, and to beat and wound its wings against the wires of its cage. In most cases there are still many battles to be fought, still many foes to be overcome, still a long and hard and toilsome warfare to be endured. We must bear our part in the Church militant, before we are received into the Church triumphant. Seldom is the renewed spirit allowed to pass at once from its Egyptian bondage to the land of promise: a long and barren wilderness is mostly to be traverst, before it can reach the heavenly Canaan. Only, when we have been truly convinced of our own sinfulness, and of Christ's righteousness, we feel that there is a difference in our warfare, that we are not left to fight singlehanded against the powers of evil, with no other strength than that of our own blind and erring understanding, and our own feeble and mutilated conscience. We feel that we have a mighty Ally, who can enable us to overcome all our enemies, and who has already overcome them in our behalf. We see that the darkness, when the light comes against it, cannot stand and fight against the light, but flies instantaneously from its face. We are taught that, if we will lift up our hearts in constant and fervent prayer to our heavenly Ally, we too shall prevail, as Israel prevailed against Amalek. We perceive that the Lord of Hosts is going before us; and if beneath the broad light of day the vision is less clear, so that we see nothing more distinct than the pillar of a cloud, no sooner does the darkness of affliction and tribulation thicken around, than

it is brightened by a beaming pillar of fire. Above all, we recognize that we have indeed come away from the fleshpots of Egypt, and their temptations, whereby a while back we were so easily beguiled: we have found out the shame and the death that is in them: and though the land on all sides be a wilderness, we know that this wilderness is not meant to be our abiding-place, but that we are to journey onward and ever onward through it to our home; that the pleasures of sin would only make it far more dangerous and deadly; and that, dreary as it may seem, God will not suffer us to faint by the way, but will bring forth water from the rock to refresh the souls of His faithful people, and will feed them with manna from heaven.

Such is the conviction which the Comforter works in the souls convinced by Him of sin and of righteousness, thus making His comfort perfect: He convinces them of judgement. Of judgement! This is an awful and terrible word in the ears of mankind. Even with reference to the relations of this world, when we are merely thinking of human laws, of human justice, of human judges, that may so easily be deceived or softened or eluded, it strikes a chill through the heart of the culprit to hear that he is called up to judgement. What fear and dismay then will there be, when the trumpet of the archangel is heard, sounding the deathnotes of Time, and crying to those who sleep in the grave, *Awake, and come to judgement!* What heart would not shrink and quail, were it to receive such a summons now? Surely there is no one here present, there is no one living upon earth, there never was a single one among the children of men, who could look searchingly back over his past life, or even over a single

day, and could then exclaim, with a distinct consciousness of the aspect sin must bear in the eyes of the Allrighteous, *I am ready to meet the Judge; I am ready to face the Judgement.*

Yet in this case also, as we have found in the two former, it is indeed the Comforter, who convinces the world of judgement: nor could there be any real stable comfort, unless this conviction were added to the others. Indeed this very conviction will enable those whom the Spirit convinces of it, to stand with meek and humble hope on the day of that last dreadful judgement, when the sentence of the law will go forth over all the generations of mankind. *The Comforter will convince the world of judgement*, our Lord says, *because the Prince of this world is judged* (v). Who is the Prince of this world? *The Lord is King*, cries the Psalmist: *let the earth rejoice; and let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof.* Is the Lord then the Prince of this world? the Prince of those who give up their hearts to this world? Is he your Prince, your King? By right He is so, by a twofold title, as your Creator, and as your Redeemer. But so long as you continue the children of this world, He is not in point of fact your King. He is not the King whom the children of this world honour and obey and serve. Their true King, the King whom they really honour and obey and serve, is . . . whom did Eve obey and serve, when she was beguiled by the pleasures of the senses to pluck the forbidden fruit? Whom did Cain obey and serve, when he lifted his hand against Abel? Whom did the generation before the Flood obey and serve, when it repented the Lord that He had made man? Whom did the children of the plain obey and serve, when they attempted to build a tower, the top of which should

reach to heaven? Whom did Esau obey and serve, when he sold his birthright? Whom did the sons of Jacob obey and serve, when they cast Joseph into the pit? Whom did Samson obey and serve, when he laid his head in the lap of Delilah? Whom did David obey and serve, when he commanded that Uriah should be set in the front of the battle, and left to die? Whom did Solomon obey and serve, when his wives turned away his heart to worship Ashtoreth and Milcom? Whom did Herod obey and serve, when he slew the children at Bethlehem? Whom did Judas obey and serve, when he betrayed his Master? Whom did Pilate obey and serve, when he gave up Him in whom he could find no fault, to be crucified. They all obeyed and served the Prince of this world, the Prince who under one shape or other reigns in the hearts of all the children of this world, swaying some by the lusts of the flesh, and others by the lusts of the eye, and others again by the pride of life. These are his lures, by which he catches the souls of men, which few can withstand, and from which few can extricate themselves. His commandments are *Kill; Commit adultery; Steal; Lie; Covet:* and this his word runneth very swiftly from one end of the earth to the other. Neighbour takes it up from neighbour; brother whispers it to brother; and father hands it down to son. There is no speech or language, in which his voice is not heard. There is no heart among the children of men, through which it has not often sounded. In truth, few, very few are the hearts through which it does not sound at times, more or less loudly, during the main part of their lives. Is it not so, brethren? Have you not heard these voices sound in your hearts, sometimes imperiously, sometimes subtly, with

wily insinuation? Nay, are there not those, who, if the truth were extorted from them, would have to confess that they have heard these voices too recently, that they have listened to them too complacently, with too little shuddering or recoil? Alas, even among those who have been convinced by the Holy Spirit both of sin and of righteousness, there are few who are not reminded ever and anon, that another law is still dwelling in their members, warring against the law of God.

Most comfortable therefore is the assurance, which the Holy Spirit brings to all such as have cast off the sin of unbelief, and have given up their hearts and minds to a living faith in Christ,—to all such as, having been taught to discern what true righteousness is, and how destitute they are of it, are seeking to put on the righteousness of Christ, —most comfortable to all such is the conviction of judgement, manifested in this, that the Prince of this world has been judged. So long as they were still in Egypt, baited with the fleshpots of Egypt, and toiling in the brick-kilns of Egypt, they could not lift up their hands against Pharaoh. The yoke of the Prince of this world was on their necks; and whithersoever he drove them, they were compelled to go. If he fed them daintily and plentifully, they thankt him and bowed down to him. At first he would do so, and supplied them with straw. He stirred the tinglings of appetites within them, which they were fain to bake into sins. But after a while his wont is to take away the straw. The very appetites and passions, by which sinners were once led into their sins, sicken and die; and yet they are forced to render the same tale of sins as before. Nay, such is the cruelty and malice of the Prince of this world, that, when he has made sure

of his drudges, he will tear away their sons and slay them. Whatever is dearest to them, whatever they prize most, he will destroy; yet they must needs go on labouring in his toils. Be it health, he will take their health from them, and cover them with leprous diseases; and yet they must go on sinning. Be it for riches that they have sold their souls, he will take away their riches, or, it may be, will turn their riches into a cankering care; and yet they must go on sinning. Be it honour and power that they have sought by dark and ungodly ways, he will snatch their power from them, and crush them with shame; and yet they must go on sinning. Be pleasure their idol, he will turn their pleasures into a swarm of stinging gnawing pains; and yet they must go on sinning. And after all, if any messenger of God comes to them, and speaks to them of the living God, and calls on them to come out from their bondage, and to serve Him, the Prince of this world cries, *What have ye to do with a living God? ye who are dead, and the slaves of dead gods? Ye are idle: back to your sins: I will not let you go.*

Thus does the Prince of this world deal with the children of this world. Glad tidings therefore must it be to those who have escaped out of his clutches, that the Prince of this world has been judged. A glad sight was it to the children of Israel, when they saw the host of Pharaoh swallowed up by the waters of the Red Sea. And so, when the children of the spiritual Israel have been convinced of sin and of righteousness by the Comforter, when they have thus been brought to loathe the land of sin and to fly from it, He delivers them from the fear of their pursuers by convincing them that Pharaoh and all his host, the Prince of this world and his whole

legion of sins, have been swallowed up for those who believe in Christ, and are clothed with His righteousness, in the blood which flowed from the Cross. Glad tidings indeed must this be, glad and comfortable tidings, so that they who are convinced thereof are ready to cry out in the words of Miriam: *Sing ye to the Lord! for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea. Yes, Death and the pale horse Sin,—pale and ghastly now that it is seen in its true colours,—hath He cast down and buried for ever in His victorious grave.*

For this is the way in which all such as have been convinced by the Comforter of the sinfulness of unbelief and of the righteousness of Christ, are further enabled to discern that the Prince of this world has been judged. His judgement was like that of Herod, whom, when he was sitting in regal state, and the people were worshiping him, and shouting, *It is a god!* the angel of the Lord smote; and straightway his crown dropt from his head, and his royal robe fell off, and behold, the worms were devouring him. They who are truly convinced of judgement, see the Prince of this world as he is, in his true shape and features, the heir of eternal wrath, the miserable victim of his own fiendish malignity. They perceive that he is indeed cursed above every beast of the field, that his path is on his belly, and that his food is dust. Their eyes are unsealed, so that he can no more deceive them. They see how Christ overcame him,—by that sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. They see how all the most fascinating temptations are scattered in a moment by the breath of God's holy law. When night is spread around us, the light of a candle will seem bright and pleasant: but when the day has lit up the heavens

and the earth, it dwindles so as hardly to be seen. Thus it is even with the more innocent pleasures of this world, to those whose eyes have been opened by faith to catch a foreglimpse of the joys of heaven; while its vicious pleasures are clean put out, as the sunshine puts out a fire. To recur to that same great scriptural type of our redemption, which has already presented itself to our thoughts,—they who have been convinced of the sin of unbelief, of that sin whereby their hearts were estranged from God, and given up to the service of this world,—and who have also been convinced of Christ's righteousness, have discerned its surpassing glory and beauty, and have felt the unspeakable blessedness of being received into a participation of that righteousness, and thereby restored to a communion with God,—all they in whom these two great works have been accomplisht, feel that they have indeed come forth from the rich luxurious land of Egypt, that the fashion of the country around them is wholly changed, and that, except for the visitations of God's grace, with which their passage through it may be brightened, it is no better than a wilderness in comparison with the land flowing with milk and honey toward which they are journeying. They no more think of fixing their home where they are, than a ship thinks of mooring in the middle of the homeless Atlantic. Their eyes are always gazing onward and forward; nor would they turn back or look round, but for the pleasure and refreshment they find in cheering and helping and strengthening their fellow-pilgrims on the way.

In order to understand the mystery, how the Prince of this world was judged, we must go back to the twelfth chapter of the same blessed Gospel, from which our text

is taken. There we find our Lord saying, with His spirit full of the bitter sufferings which awaited Him, *Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Shall I say, Father, save me from this hour? But it was for this cause that I came to this hour. Father, glorify Thy name. Then,* we further read, *there came a voice from heaven saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.* Hereupon Jesus said, *Now is the judgement of this world: now shall the Prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, shall draw all men to Me.* In these words we are taught, how the Prince of this world was to be judged, how he was to be cast out. The Father declared from heaven, that He had glorified and would still glorify His name: and in that He did so, in the very act of His shewing forth His glory, the world was judged; and the Prince of this world, whose dominion over the world lay in his having drawn it away from the recognition of God's glory and name, was cast out. But how did the Father purpose to glorify His name? It was to be glorified in this, that His Onlybegotten Son Jesus Christ was to be lifted up from the earth to His throne upon the Cross. This was such a manifestation of God's glory, that the sun turned pale before it, and the mid-day sky grew dark. For then, when Christ was lifted up from the earth, the glory of God was shewn forth even more than in the creation of the world. Then was shewn forth the glory of God's holiness. Then was shewn forth the glory of God's mercy. Then was shewn forth the glory of God's righteousness. Then was shewn forth the glory of God's love. Hereby too, above all, does the Comforter convince us both of sin and of righteousness,—by the Cross of Christ. It is at the foot of the Cross, that we most deeply and thoroughly

feel the sin of not believing in Him, who came down from heaven to die upon that Cross for us. It is at the foot of the Cross, that we feel all the hatefulness of sin, which could not be removed from the souls of men, except by the death of the Son of God. It is at the foot of the Cross, when the consummating trial of death is past,—when He, whose every word has manifested the divine power of love to overcome sin's fiercest and subtilest temptations, has given up the ghost,—that, with the centurion, we recognize the perfect righteousness of Christ: and as the purpose for which He was lifted up was, that He might become our righteousness, and draw us to partake in the righteousness which He had obtained for us, so it is at the foot of the Cross, that we feel how we are admitted to a share in the righteousness of Christ. Thus too, if, standing at the foot of the Cross, we raise our eyes to Him who was nailed thereon,—if in the light of the Spirit we behold Him there lifted up as our Righteousness,—if we call to remembrance what He left, and what He embraced, for our sakes,—if we thus fix the earnest gaze of our hearts and souls and minds on the glory of God as manifested on the Cross of Christ,—then, when our eyes drop from thence on the things of this world, we cannot fail to discern how the Prince of this world has been judged.

Now to Him who convinces us of sin and of righteousness and of judgement, the Comforting Spirit of God, and to Jesus Christ, our Righteousness, by whom the Prince of this world was judged, in the Unity of the Eternal Father, be all praise and thanksgiving and adoration, world without end.

SERMON V.

THE THREEFOLD CONVICTION OF THE COMFORTER.

JOHN xvi. 8—11.

When the Comforter is come, He will convince the world of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgement; of Sin, because they believe not in Me; of Righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more; of Judgement, because the Prince of this world is judged.

THE great work of the Comforter, the work for the sake of which He was to come down from heaven, as set forth by our Lord in His farewell discourse with the disciples, was to produce the threefold conviction of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement. This is the divine work which the Holy Spirit was to perform, as the Paraclete, the Comforter and Advocate, the Helper and Strengthener of the disciples in the mighty task committed to them of bringing all the nations of the earth into that Church, of which they were to lay and to be the foundations. By working this conviction, He was to be their Advocate, pleading and upholding their cause against the craft and subtilty of the Deceiver; He was to be their Strengthener, endowing their words with the power of piercing and turning the soul; He was to prepare the way for them whithersoever they went, and to give them the victory, making their enemies throw aside their arms, and rush over and enlist in their ranks. The conviction was to be wrought

in *the world:* hence it was to be universal in its character as well as its extent; differing herein from those special gifts, whether intellectual or more immediately spiritual, which are bestowed by the Spirit upon individual believers. The truths, of which the Comforter was to convince the world, were truths intimately pertaining to the whole human race, and to every single member thereof. While all men, as we have seen in the former sermons, have obstinately refused to be convinced of them by any other teacher, they are yet such as none, before whom they are set rightly, can resist, except through hardness of heart and blindness of understanding. Moreover it was to be a preparatory work, a work by which the nations were to be gathered into the Church of the Saviour. For, in order thereto, this threefold conviction was indispensable: no people would ever have thought of entering into Christ's Church, unless they had previously been convinced of the sinfulness of their former idolatrous alienation from God,—and of the righteousness of Him, who, after pouring forth His life on the Cross for the sins of the world, ascended to wear the crown of eternal Righteousness on the throne of His Father,—and of the judgement which had then gone forth against all the gods of the nations, and against all the abominations of their worship, casting them down and destroying them, as Dagon was cast down and shattered to pieces by the presence of the ark of the Lord.

That the Comforter did indeed perform this work, after Christ went up to His Father, we know: we know too with what power He performed it. The promise in the text is, that He shall help the disciples in their great and seemingly impossible task, by convincing the world of sin

and of righteousness and of judgement. But this threefold conviction, which He was to work in the world, He wrought first in the disciples themselves. For greatly did they too need it, as we see by manifold evidence in the events which preceded the Crucifixion. Greatly did they need to be convinced of sin, of their own deplorable weakness and frailty, who were so forward and confident in declaring that they would die with their Lord, but would never deny Him, yet who anon, a few hours after, as might almost have been anticipated from their presumption, forsook him and fled. Greatly did they need to be convinced of righteousness, of His heavenly righteousness, of that righteousness which alone is precious in the eyes of God,—they who, even after the Resurrection, after the wonderful chain of proofs which had made it manifest that their Master's Kingdom was not of this world, still clung to the hope that He was about to set up an earthly throne, and whose chief desire was, not to be made partakers in His heavenly righteousness, but to sit on the right hand and on the left of that earthly throne. Greatly too did they need to be convinced of judgement, of the judgement which strips the world at once of its lures and its terrours,—they over whom the fears and charms of the world had still such power, and whose flesh was so weak that they could not watch one hour with their Lord in His agony. But when the Comforter came to them, then, and from that time forward, all was changed. Their eyes were opened; their hearts were new-strung; and the spirit was enabled to triumph over the weakness of the flesh. Their conviction of sin became deeper, in proportion as they were raised above it: as they cast off the slough of their former nature, they saw more and more clearly how vile

it was. The gaze of their hearts was for ever fixt on the righteousness of their Lord, as He sat at the right hand of God: and this now was their one desire, not to exercise dominion, like the princes of the gentiles, but to be filled more and more with that righteousness, and to shew forth its glory to the nations, and to bring all mankind to become partakers in its blessings. And as for the Prince of this world, they well knew that he was judged: they knew too that they themselves were sent forth to proclaim and to execute judgement against him, to defy him, to set him at nought, to drive him from all his strongholds with the sword of the Spirit, and to trample him under foot. If he beat them with stripes, they rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for their Lord. If he imprisoned them, they sang praises to God, until the doors of their prison burst open, and the captive was enabled to set the jailor free. If he stoned them, they lookt up to heaven, and saw the glory of God, and fell asleep, shewing that they had indeed seen it, by praying for the murderers whom the Prince of this world had stirred up against them. If they had to endure the extremities of earthly suffering, they counted their affliction light, in the assurance that it would work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Thus mighty was the conviction which the Comforter wrought in the souls of the disciples: and in the strength of this conviction the poor unlearned fishermen of Galilee went forth, confident that their Master's promise would be fulfilled, and that the Comforter would always go along with them, to work the same threefold conviction in the world; to bring the world to a recognition of its sinfulness, summed up in the sin of unbelief in Him who came to

dwell in the sight of the world as the Incarnate Image of God; and at the same time to a recognition of the righteousness of Him whom by its agents and representatives it had denied and crucified, and of the judgement fallen upon the Prince whom it had been accustomed to worship and serve. When we cast our thoughts back on the state of the world at that time, and call to mind what an enterprise this was, how totally alien from anything that the heart of man had ever conceived,—when we remember that almost everything, which in earlier ages had seemed of fairer promise, was utterly extinct, and that evil had set its foot upon the neck of the world, and was trampling upon its heart, and was reigning with uncontested desolating tyranny over the whole earth,—our natural judgement exclaims that the men who could form so wild a scheme, must have been *full of new wine*, or, with Festus, that they must have been *mad*. Yet, unachievable as their undertaking was by any human power, the disciples did not go forth in vain: their trust in the aid of their heavenly Strengthener was fully justified. At the sound of their preaching the world did recognize its sinfulness, as it had never recognized its sinfulness before. It recognized the sinfulness which pervaded and tainted even such feelings and actions as it had till then deemed virtuous and praiseworthy. It recognized that new radical sin of unbelief, which at the time was almost accounted a part of wisdom and virtue; inasmuch as unbelief then was unbelief in man's perversions and corruptions of the Divine Idea, and in the monstrous fables which vagrant fancy and allegorizing speculation had strung thereto, — an unbelief which itself was involved in the belief in the Son of God; only that this belief substituted the fulness of living truth for

the chaotic void of dreary negations. So too did the world indeed receive a conviction of righteousness. It acknowledged that He who had gone to His Father had fulfilled and shewn forth all righteousness. It learnt how totally different the righteousness of heaven is from that which it had set up for itself; how God had cast down the very qualities which it had been wont to boast of and glory in, and had exalted those which it had esteemed abject and servile; how the stars had dropt from its fictitious heaven, while the true stars had come forward in their pure mild light. It discerned that ambition and self-exaltation, fields of slaughter and nations led in triumph, the brightest blossoms of the imagination and the richest harvest of the understanding, are not worth a cup of cold water given to one of Christ's little ones; and on the other hand that meekness and forbearance and patience and endurance and humility and selfdenial, which it would always have derided and scouted, are the graces of the Kingdom of Heaven; a kingdom not to be gained by ruling over mankind, but by ministering to them, not by destroying, but by dying for them. Herein moreover, and in divers other ways, it perceived that the Prince of this world had been judged. It found out that the power of its false gods,—both of those that were throned openly in its cities, and of those that were reigning secretly in its heart, had past away, or rather had never been,—that "Peor and Baalim Had left their temples dim,"—that their oracles were struck dumb, "No voice or hideous hum Ran through the arched roof in words deceiving,"—and that all their images were wood and stone, which could neither see nor hear, much less understand and will and command.

It was through the power of the Comforter working along with them, and through the conviction of sin and righteousness and judgement which He wrought, and enabled them to work, that the Apostles wrested so large a part of the world from the dominion of its Prince, and brought it into the Church of their Lord. But the empire of the Prince of this world was vast and deeply rooted. It spread north and south and east and west, from sea to sea, and over all the isles of the sea, wherever man had set foot; and it was rooted in the corrupt heart of every child that had sprung from the race of Adam. Hence that portion of the world which the Apostles during their lifetime brought into the Church of their Lord, enormous and prodigious as it was with reference to their human qualifications for such an undertaking, was yet but a small part of the whole earth: and though the word of life continued to go forth with power, with that power which the Comforter alone could give, for some generations after their death, it was still very far from subduing the whole earth; nor has it done so at this day. Even now there are immeasurable regions and countless masses of men, that do not even wear the name of Christ, and so can never have been convinced of sin and of righteousness and of judgement. Indeed many centuries have past away, since Christ went to His Father, during which His Kingdom has scarcely been enlarged at all. What shall we say then? that the Comforter only came down in the first ages of the Church, and that, being wearied by the obstinate unbelief and unrighteousness and worldly-mindedness of mankind, He too went back to the Father, and left the world to drift along whithersoever the flood of its sins would bear it? Not so. The Comforter was to *abide* with Christ's

disciples *for ever*: and where He abides, unless He be hindered, He continually works that threefold conviction, which He came at first to work, and without which even His mighty presence would avail us little. If the increase of Christ's Church has often been grievously checkt, if age after age has rolled by, during which the onrushing waves of the world have seemed to be almost encroaching upon it, the cause of this has not been that the Comforter has ever failed to help those who have gone forth, with the conviction of sin and of righteousness and of judgement in their own hearts, to work the same conviction in their brethren. The cause has rather been, that they who ought to have formed the vanguard of the Church, have themselves rejected the conviction of the Comforter, and hardened and deadened their souls to it. They who had no deep feeling of the sin of not believing in Christ, as not only in itself the main head of sin, but also the source of numberless others, did not care to win men from it, thinking it of slight moment whether a man lies under it or no. In like manner they who had lost the perception of Christ's righteousness, both in its sole exclusive perfection, and as the ground of all other righteousness, and had relapst into the vision of a human earthly righteousness, — and who, on the other hand, had totally forgotten that the Prince of this world had been judged, nay, who had cozened themselves into fancying that Christ would allow him to sit on the lower steps, or at least at the foot of His throne, —how could they yearn, with that fervent desire which brings its own fulfilment, to deliver the world from the bondage of its unrighteousness, and so to save it from judgement? Whereas, whenever Christ's servants have been animated with a strong living conviction of sin and

of righteousness and of judgement, and have been moved thereby to long for the redemption of their brethren from sin and judgement to righteousness, the Comforter has always gone along with them, and the word of God in their hands has truly been the sword of the Spirit. Whatever increase Christ's Kingdom has received from the beginning down to these times, it has received through the power of the Comforter; and if it is receiving any at this day, if we find reason to bless God for the manner in which the heathen in any part of the earth are now coming into His Kingdom, our especial thanksgiving and praise are due to the Comforter, who is still working His threefold conviction, and casting down the abominations of idolatry thereby.

Nor is it solely in order to the extension of Christ's Kingdom among the heathens, that the Comforter still abides upon earth, working His threefold conviction. Christ's Kingdom is not only to be extended through space, but to be prolonged through time. New souls are perpetually coming into life; new generations are springing up: and it is not enough for the children, that their fathers have been convinced of sin and righteousness and judgement: alas! the conviction of the parents is by no means a pledge for that of the children. Man cannot transmit faith, he cannot transmit righteousness, as sin has been transmitted, from generation to generation. Each generation, nay, every individual soul must be convinced anew; and this conviction must be wrought by the Comforter, if it is to be strong and lasting.

So that the work of the Comforter was not one which was to be performed once for all, like the sacrifice offered up by Christ on the Cross. He did not come down, as

Christ did, to dwell a few years upon earth, and then to return back to the Father: He came to abide with Christ's Church for ever. Moreover, as His work at the first was universal and preparatory, so has it ever been, and so is it still; universal, in that His threefold conviction belongs to every child of man, and is such that without it none can have any clear insight into truth, as it is in himself, or in the world, or in God; and preparatory, in that only thereby can any one livingly and consciously become a member of Christ's holy Body. Thus it is still just as necessary as ever, that the Spirit of God should vouchsafe to convince the world, and every individual soul, of the sin of not believing in Christ,—of the righteousness which Christ, when raised from the dead and returned to His Father, obtained for all such as believe in Him,—and of the judgement wherewith the Prince of this world has been judged by Him who died on the Cross. This too is the great work and mission of the Church in the midst of the world, to preach these truths to the world with the power of the Spirit, to the end that the world, being convinced thereby, may turn from unbelief to faith, and from unrighteousness to righteousness, and thus may escape the everlasting, irrevocable judgement which has fallen upon its Prince. This is the controversy of the Church with the world. Seeing that the world lies under sin, concluded under sin, because of unbelief, because it will not and cannot believe in anything except itself, the Church cries out to the world, *Thou art under sin; thou tossest to and fro beneath it; thou heavest and quakest beneath it; but thou canst not shake it off: thy very struggles to shake it off are fresh proofs of thy sin: for thy struggles are made in thine own strength; and this is thy sin, the parent of all thy other sins, to believe in thyself,*

to believe in thine own strength. This is thy sin, that thou believest and ever hast believed in thyself, and not in God, not even when He came down to dwell, shorn of His invisible glory, and clothed in a body of thy dust, in the midst of thee. Even then thou wouldst not believe in Him, but didst gather the whole army of thy sins against Him, and wentest forth to battle against Him, and nailedst Him to the Cross, and thoughtest thou couldst hold Him by the chains of Death, making use of this thy master and destroyer, as though he were thy slave. Thou thoughtest in the hardness of thy heart, that He who was come down to redeem and renew thee, was even such as thou art, frail, feeble, mortal, the child of a day, the heir of the grave. Thou didst not believe in Him; thou accusedst Him of sin, and slewest Him. But God raised Him up from the grave, and shewed that Death had no power to hold Him. He raised Him up, and took Him to Himself, and seated Him by Himself on the throne of His righteousness, and thus, in the sight of men and angels, declared Him to be righteous, and gave Him that righteousness, which thou too shalt receive, if thou wilt cast away thy unbelief and thy self-worship, and wilt believe in thy Maker who came to deliver thee from these and all thy other infirmities and diseases. Of thyself thou hast no righteousness: scarcely canst thou conceive what manner of thing righteousness may be. Thou findest righteousness in the glare of thine own volcanic fires, in the perishable beauty of thine own fruits, in the bright polish or the wild ruggedness of thine own rocks. Thou heedest not that the light, which alone brings forth the beauty of whatever may seem beautiful in thee, must descend upon thee from heaven. Thou deemest, blind as thou art, that thy Prince is an angel of light. Thou knowest not that he fell long ago like lightning from heaven,

that the Lord has broken his staff and his sceptre, and cast him down to the ground. Believe this, O world! believe in the Lord whom thou hast crucified: believe in His pure and perfect righteousness: believe and know full surely that thy Prince, whom thou worshipest, has been cast down into hell: then shalt thou be at rest and be quiet; and all the voices of thy nations shall break forth into singing.

Such is the message which the Church, in her prophetical character, is charged to proclaim to the world. It is a message akin to that which was committed to the prophets of old. They too were commanded to cry against the sins of the world: they were commanded to call man to faith in Jehovah and in His righteousness: they were commanded to denounce the judgements of God against all manner of iniquity. The words too in which the prophets uttered their message, are still in great part suited to the message which the Church has to deliver to the world. Only the ancient prophets had to speak of things which as then were merely foreknown and predetermined in the eternal counsels of God, but which had not yet clothed themselves in the garb of Time, or become embodied in such a form as to be distinctly perceivable by man: they could merely be descried by man so far as he was allowed to stand on the holy mountain, from which the eyes of the Allseeing look out into the abyss of the future. The Church on the other hand, in her prophetical office, has to speak of that which she has heard, and seen with her eyes, which she has lookt upon, and her hands have handled, of the Word of Life. She speaks of sin, which has been, and still is, which for ages held mankind under the spiritual palsy of unbelief, but which may now be overcome through Him who came to this very end, that

we might believe in Him, as the express Image of the Eternal Father. She speaks of a righteousness, which has been, and still is, which was manifested upon earth when Christ dwelt in the form of a man, sinless in a world of sin, and which was certified by the seal of the Allrighteous, when He was exalted to the right hand of God; of a righteousness which He obtained, not for Himself, but for the unrighteous race of man, which He has given to the whole multitude of His saints ever since He went up into heaven, and which He still gives and ever will give to all such as seek it with the earnest prayer of faith, until that day when the twilight of this world's existence shall have past away for ever, and the Sun of Righteousness shall drive the darkness of unrighteousness into the nethermost caverns of hell. She speaks of a judgement whereby the Prince of this world has already been judged: she declares to mankind that a Man has lived upon earth, a Man like themselves, born of a woman, over whom the Prince of this world had no power, who overcame him with all his temptations, and who thereby shewed to mankind how they too may overcome the Prince of this world; for that his sway is only over those who obstinately linger in their soul-crushing unbelief; but that, for those who will fight against him in faith, he has been overcome, so that they too shall overcome him. Thus her voice has far greater power than that of the prophets who lived before the coming of our Lord; and through the working of the Comforter, inspiring her words, it produces a living conviction in the hearts of those who listen to it in faith. And as no one can come to Christ with a sincere devotion of heart and mind, until this threefold conviction has been wrought in him, this is still, as it was at the first, the

universal preparation of the world, and of every individual soul, for the reception of the life of Christ.

But further, while the work of the Comforter in the world was not a work to be wrought once for all at the beginning of the new dispensation, and to be then left to propagate itself, and to spring up selfsown, with no other husbandry than that of man,—inasmuch as, had this been the case, it would not have outlasted a single generation; while it is a work which the Spirit is continually performing anew in all parts of the earth, calling generation after generation out of the misery of their sins and the darkness of their unbelief, and striving to convince generation after generation of the righteousness of Christ, and of the judgement which has fallen upon the Prince of this world; so on the other hand it will never be sufficient for the establishment of any single soul in faith and in righteousness, if the Comforter merely comes to it once to work His conviction once for all in it. Ere long the conviction would grow dim and fade away; nor can this be averted, unless the impression be perpetually renewed by the same Divine Hand. We cannot advance uninterruptedly in our spiritual, any more than in our bodily life, from one degree of brightness to another: the shadow of the earth will ever and anon fling the darkness of night over us; sleep will creep upon us; we flag and grow weary, and yield to it; and we should sleep on self-indulgently, unless we were awakened again and again by the light of the Sun of Righteousness, piercing through our night, and bursting the bands of our sleep. There should indeed be a progress in our spiritual life: else that life, even if it be more than visionary, will too plainly be giving way before the manifold influences which try to check and destroy it. But our

progress, so long as we continue in the flesh, will never be unbroken; nor shall we make any real progress at all, without fresh impulses from the Power which first set us in motion. Our noon should keep on growing brighter and brighter: but it will only do so when we live under a perpetual dawn, when new influxes of light are ever pouring upon us from the same celestial Fountain. For, as it is a law of all life, that every creature, while it is the offspring of all former generations, shall yet have a new germ of life in itself, so, in our moral life, every act is at once the result of our whole previous moral being, and springs immediately and freshly from the will. Thus every act is a link in a chain, which stretches back to the origin of our consciousness, and the first link of a new chain, which will reach through our whole future existence; and according as philosophers have fixt their minds on one of these views, or on the other, they have asserted the necessity or the freedom of human actions; exemplifying how speculation, when it rushes on, without looking around, in a straight path of simple logical deduction, is sure to lose itself ere long in a vacuum of abstractions: whereas it should continually bend the line of its march by a careful comparison with the realities which experience sets before it, shaping its course hereby into an orbit; and then it will return to the point from which it started, reaching it again from an opposite side, and thus gaining the assurance that its conclusions were not partial and premature. And as in our moral, so in our spiritual life, no moment stands alone: there is no moment in it, which is not connected by indissoluble ties of motive and impulse with all that we have hitherto felt and thought and done: at the same time no moment in it will have any true spiritual energy, unless

we are immediately prompted and animated by the lifegiving Spirit of God.

Hence it is not enough for us to be convinced of the sin of unbelief once for all, even though that conviction be the work of the Comforter. When a body is put in motion, we know, unless its motion were checkt by a number of retarding forces, it would continue to move on without limit; but we know no less surely that these retarding forces will soon lay hand on it and arrest it. So we might fancy that, when the soul is once lifted up from the earth, and projected into the free atmosphere of faith, it would continue to soar into the heaven of heavens, nor rest until it reacht the throne of God. But we know too well that this is not so, that it gravitates to the world of the senses, and that it has a leaden weight of selfwill bearing it downward. Our senses and our carnal appetites are ever whispering and muttering and shouting to us, that the only realities are those which we can see and hear and touch and taste and smell, and that it is idleness and folly to give up these solid substantial delights for the dreamy phantoms and spectres of faith: and our selfwill cleaves pertinaciously to the world where we are lords and masters, and shrinks from that into which it cannot enter except by a sacrifice of itself. Against these hindrances we cannot even strive, much less rise above them, unless the Comforter be continually helping us onward, by convincing us more and more deeply of the sin of not believing in Christ. Hence he who truly believes, the stronger his faith in the unseen world may be, with the greater humiliation will he deplore his own inability to live in an unwavering communion with it, and to subdue the temptations which would draw him away from it; the more earnestly will he cry, *Lord, I believe;*

help Thou my unbelief. Thus the union of opposites in our nature will continually display itself under the form of what the understanding deems to be contradictions; of which we may continue almost unconscious, so long as we merely disport ourselves among the superficial appearances of this world, but which come out more and more numerously and distinctly, the wider our eyes are opened to discern spiritual realities.

Again, as our growth in faith is sure to increase our conviction of unbelief, and of our need of the everpresent help of the Comforter to overcome that unbelief, in like manner our conviction of Christ's righteousness must needs deepen our conviction of our own unrighteousness, and of our utter inability to overcome it without the constant aid of the same heavenly Ally. For this conviction also would soon stagnate or dry up, unless it be evermore renewed and replenisht from its everflowing Source. Our own righteousness, the righteousness of this world, rises up before our eyes, and tries to hide and supplant the righteousness of Christ. We are ever too prone to believe that we have already attained; and thus we slip back from that righteousness which comes to us through faith in Christ, to a righteousness of our own, which is of the Law. Nor is there any security against this delusion, save in fashioning ourselves, so far as we may, after the example of the great Apostle of righteousness, forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forward to the things which are still before us, under a contrite acknowledgement that our whole spiritual life is nought, except so far as it issues straight from the Spirit of God.

So too it would never be enough for us, if the Comforter merely vouchsafed once for all to convince us that the

Prince of this world has been judged. For although he has been judged most certainly and completely, it is only for the children of God, for those who go forth to the battle against him with the assurance that they are so, and that their Father is with them. The children of this world are still under its Prince, and still pay him honour and worship: in their eyes he still wears his royal robes and crown. Hence, so long as we abide in this intermediate state, doubtful about our true parentage, — so long as we think it possible that there can be any good apart from God,—the Prince of this world will ever and anon come to us: and as he who was a liar from the beginning, will continue a liar until the end, he tells us that he has not been judged, that he is still the sole Prince, the absolute sovereign of this world, and that he will give us the kingdoms of this world, and their glory, and their beauty, and their pleasure, if we will only fall down and worship him. We saw that the condition of those who have been convinced of judgement, is analogous to that of the Israelites, when they were delivered from the bondage and from the fleshpots of Egypt, and had seen the host of Pharaoh overthrown in the Red Sea, and were journeying through the Wilderness toward the Land of Promise. Yet even after they had been thus wondrously and mercifully delivered, even after they had been the witnesses of this terrific overthrow, many hearts amongst them failed amid the privations of the wilderness; many longed to go back into Egypt, to go back to their fleshpots, forgetting the bondage attacht to them, or even thinking that bondage desirable for the sake of such enjoyments. In the midst of the wilderness too the Prince of this world still came to them with the temptations of Baalpeor. Nay,

did he not persuade some that the manna itself was his gift, and that, as such, they must hoard it up, until it stank? and did he not at another time move the whole multitude to loathe it? just as he still is so often able, by pampering our sensual, to deaden our spiritual appetite, so that our heavenly food becomes stale and flat and tasteless to us. Even when our Lord Himself was upon earth in the form of a man, the Prince of this world, although he had been so utterly baffled, as a foretaste of the judgement which awaited him, only departed from Him *for a season*. And as he assailed the Head, so has he unweariably been assailing the whole body of the Church with all manner of crafty snares, as we see from the very first in the sin of Ananias, and in that of Simon Magus. Nor is his malice less in these days, or his subtilty, or his assiduity. He is ever lying in wait to assail every individual member of that Church, which can only be built of the spoils wrested from him, and which he is ceaselessly labouring to undermine and destroy. We cannot need to look back to the history of David and of Solomon,—surely we shall find ample evidence in our own hearts,—to prove to us that, however we may at any time have been convinced of judgement, still the Prince of this world does not allow us to remain quietly in that conviction; that he will try to drive or to lure us out of it, at one time with some new form of sin, the deceitfulness and misery of which we have not already found out,—at other times, it may be, with those very sins, the bitterness of which we have already tasted, and over which we fancy we have triumpht. For we are never safe: the very stubble of our old sins may run into our eyes and blind us; the dregs of them may choke us; the ashes of them may kindle again and consume

us. Therefore do we always need the present help of the Comforter, in order that His conviction may not pass away and be effaced, but may abide in our souls full of life and power; so that the Prince of this world may be judged in us and by us also, even as he was judged by our Lord.

In fact this is one of the main differences between a speculative and a practical conviction. For the former it is enough if we have been convinced of a truth once: the conviction will abide with us. It may lie dormant for a long time in the storehouse of our thoughts; but there, when we need it, we shall find it; and it will be just as serviceable as ever. For no contrary forces are drawing us away from it, or striving to quench and suppress it. But with regard to our practical convictions all this is otherwise. They cost us many a hard struggle, in the first instance to gain them, then to retain our hold on them, and above all to carry them into act. For the power of the world is around us, acting upon us by our senses, by our appetites, by our feelings, by our circumstances, by our companions, by habit, by opinion, and endeavouring in all these ways to infect us with its own changefulness. Its stream is ever bearing us along, and would never allow us to take our stand on any firm ground of consistent principle: it would have us do as others do, drift on at the caprice of its ever-varying impulses. Moreover a practical principle requires practice to strengthen it, and even to keep it alive. Unless it be carried into act, it sickens and wastes away: words, if its sole utterance be in them, drain its lifeblood from it: practice alone can make it a consubstantial part of our souls. Indeed the purpose of every conviction is to produce belief: it is not meant to lie as a dead proposition at the top of our minds

but to be embodied in them among our principles of thought: and when the conviction is the work of the Spirit, it must produce faith, that is, a belief which is received as a principle, not merely by the understanding, but also by the heart and the will, a belief which becomes a principle, not merely of thought, but also of life and action. Thus, if we are convinced of sin by any other teacher, our conviction will vent itself in empty words, and we shall remain contentedly in our sin; but if the conviction be the work of the Comforter, we shall desire and yearn to come out of our sin, and to cast it away. Thus again, if our conviction of righteousness be the work of the Comforter, we shall not deem it enough to contemplate and admire and extoll, the righteousness of Christ; we shall seek to make it our own, by such means as the Comforter shall vouchsafe to manifest to us for doing so. And in like manner, if our conviction of judgement be wrought in us by the Comforter, it will not satisfy us to know that the Prince of this world was judged long since, when our Saviour gave Himself up a Sacrifice on the Cross for the sins of the world; we shall desire that we also may be enabled to judge him, that in our lives also he may be judged.

The conviction of sin, we have seen, when it is wrought in us by the Comforter, leads us to seek that pardon and remission of sins, which Christ bestows on His people; and as the special sin, of which the Comforter convinces us, is that of not believing in Christ, in so doing He brings us out of our unbelief to faith, and makes us desire and pray to have our faith strengthened. The conviction of righteousness, when it is the work of the Comforter, makes us seek to be clothed in the righteousness of Christ, and

thus is preparatory to our justification: the two acts, as I have said before, may be coinstantaneous; but in idea they are distinct. So again, the conviction of judgement, when it is the work of the Spirit, is preparatory to our sanctification. The judgement with which our Lord judged the Prince of this world, may be regarded as twofold: it was a judgement of absolute and entire condemnation; and it was a judgement of utter overthrow and confusion. He at once past and executed the sentence of condemnation against the Prince of this world, condemned him as worthy of hell, and cast him into hell. As in His temptation Christ baffled the Tempter, by exposing the hollowness and deceitfulness of all his wiles and lures, so that the Tempter was rebuked and departed from Him, in like manner does Christ's whole life expose the hollowness and deceitfulness of sin. His whole life condemns sin, by bringing it to the light, so that its real nature and character is discerned, by stripping it of its masks and disguises, by laying it bare under all its forms, by shewing how false it is, how delusive, how hateful, how deadly, how in all its forms it is enmity against God, and therefore misery and desolation and despair, how the worm is spread under it, and the worm covers it. The judgement against the Prince of this world was indeed completed and consummated by the Sacrifice on the Cross: as the Crucifixion however was not the whole of the sacrifice offered up by Christ for the sins of the world, but only its closing, perfecting act,—as the whole of our Saviour's life, from the humiliation of His Incarnation down to that still deeper humiliation, when He, who had humbled Himself that He might enter into life in the shape of an innocent babe, humbled Himself still more that He might pass through

the gates of death with the agony and the shame of sin, was one continual sacrifice for sin,—so was it one continual warfare against sin, and victory over sin, and judgement against sin. *What the law could not do, in that it was weak by reason of our carnal nature, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, for the sake of sin, condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.*

For the craft and subtilty of the Prince of this world, that craft and subtilty which was the ground of his power, consisted mainly in this, that, having first beguiled men into giving up their hearts to this world, he then persuaded them that he was the absolute disposer of all the good things of this world, that he alone had the power of bestowing them, and that he would bestow them on such alone as paid him homage and allegiance, and sought them from him, by the means which he pointed out to them. He persuaded them that the kingdom of this world and the power of this world and the glory of this world were the noblest objects which man could aim at, and that they were his to give and to withhold, so that, unless these prizes were sought through him, there was no chance of gaining them. Nor were his persuasions vain. That these are indeed the highest objects of human endeavour, was almost universally believed, not as a mere abstract proposition, but with a thorough faith, which shrank from no exertions, from no difficulties, from no dangers, for the sake of attaining to them. Even the Jews, along with the rest of mankind, lay under this delusion; nor were our Lord's chosen disciples wholly free from it, so long as He continued here below. They did not understand

how the Prince of this world had already been judged, how in truth he had been judged from the very beginning, together with his kingdom. They still lookt and sought for an earthly kingdom, for earthly power and earthly glory; only they deemed that their Master was the Prince, from whom they were to receive these coveted rewards. They could not make out, any more than Pilate, how He could be a King, and yet that His Kingdom should not be of this world. Our Lord on the other hand declared that the true kingdom, the true power, and the true glory, belong not to the Prince of this world, but to the Father, and that, as belonging to the Father, they also belong to the Son: and the great purpose of His life was to shew forth what that true Kingdom, the Kingdom of Heaven, is, and wherein that true power, wherein that true glory lies.

Thus through His whole life did Christ judge the Prince of this world. When He, who was born King of the Jews, was born in the stable at Bethlehem, and when the shepherds in the fields were called to be the first witnesses of His birth, then was the Prince of this world judged: and this judgement was made manifest in that he, whom the Prince of this world had set upon the throne of Judea, was so greatly troubled at the tidings, and tried to frustrate the purpose of God by the massacre of the children in Bethlehem. Hereby the Prince of this world laid bare the hell that boiled in his breast; and though he sent forth the fiercest and bloodiest of his servants to establish his throne, he was utterly foiled. When He, who came to fulfill all righteousness, submitted to be baptized by John, the greater by the less, the sinless by the sinful, God by man, then was the Prince of this world judged. Then was

man taught not to seek his own glory and his own righteousness, but the glory and the righteousness of God,—not to seek to be first, but to be last: and therefore were the heavens opened, and the voice from heaven heard, saying, *This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* Then was the Prince of this world judged, then was the serpent's head bruised by the Seed of the woman, when a Man walkt on the earth in whom the Father was well pleased. Again in the whole course of our Lord's temptation the Prince of this world was judged: he was judged in that all his most powerful, and till then wellnigh irresistible, lures were scattered at once by being brought to the light of God's word. Throughout the whole Sermon on the Mount the Prince of this world is judged: his most vaunted blessings are declared to be woes; his woes, the very things which he had made men account mean and abject and miserable and hateful, are declared to be blessed. Every time that Christ forgave sins, the Prince of this world was judged. It was proclaimed in the sight of heaven, God Himself bearing witness, that a Man was walking upon the earth, mightier than the Prince of this world, and who could wrest his subjects and his captives even out of his nethermost prison; and men were taught how they might obtain this deliverance, how they might burst the galling yoke which the Prince of this world had fastened round their necks,—by faith. By every miracle which Christ wrought, the Prince of this world was judged. In that He cast out devils by the Spirit of God, it was proved that the Kingdom of God had come upon mankind, and that among the sons of men there was One, who had bound the strong man, and was spoiling his goods: and when the devils took

refuge in the herd of swine, and ran down the precipice into the lake, then was it shewn what is sin's only congenial abode, its only rightful doom. Moreover by every grace in our Lord's character the Prince of this world was judged,—by His meekness, by His lowliness, by His patience, by His forbearance, by His infinite loving-kindness, by his perseverance in welldoing, by His spotless purity, by His zeal in working the works of His Father, by His never seeking His own glory, but always the glory of God, by every deed and every word wherein He shewed that the Fulness of the Godhead was dwelling upon earth. Each of these graces exposed the spuriousness and deformity of the counterfeit or opposite, which the Prince of this world had set up to have dominion over the hearts of mankind. Of the manner in which the judgement on the Prince of this world was consummated on the Cross, I have spoken already. And then, when he had thus been finally overthrown, Death, the last enemy, was also subdued: its sting was torn from it; and the victory of the grave was converted into the victory of Him who was laid in the grave; a victory gained, not for Himself, but for all in all ages who shall be laid in the grave, clothed in His righteousness, after having manifested in their lives how the Prince of this world is judged. For all such, Death is judged, so as wholly to change his nature, and to become the giver of eternal life, taking away the burthen of sinful flesh, and the delusive mists of the world, from those who have been sanctified by the Spirit, and unsealing their eyes to behold, and their hearts to worship and rejoice in, the glory of the living God.

In all these manifold ways, do they who are convinced of judgement by the Comforter, perceive that the Prince

of this world has been judged. And what ensues? Will they follow him into his judgement? Will they desire to share in his condemnation? to be confounded along with him in his confusion? Surely this cannot be. They who have been truly convinced of judgement, will no longer cleave to that, which, they know, their Saviour has condemned: they will no longer walk in the train of him, whom their Master has overcome and cast out. Feelings of honour, of justice, of compassion, may sometimes urge a man to uphold the cause of the vanquisht: but here all honour and right and mercy are united on the side of the Victor; and the victory consists in this, that the shame of sin has been unveiled, that its hatefulness has been disclosed, that men's eyes have been opened to discern its malice and its cruelty, its falsehood and its woe. They whose eyes have been thus opened must needs loathe and turn away from sin. In the consciousness of their own weakness they will shun it, and never run rashly into temptation: but when it comes across their path, they will fight against it without being dismayed, in the strength of Him, who, they know, has overcome it. As Christ condemned sin, so will all His faithful servants condemn sin. They will condemn it in the world, but still more in their own hearts; for until they have condemned it in themselves, in vain will they try to condemn it in the world. And as Christ overcame sin, so will all His soldiers strive to overcome sin, first in themselves, and then in the world,—to overcome it in themselves, by casting it out from themselves, and purifying themselves from it,—and in like manner to overcome it in the world, by doing what they can to cast it out from the world, and to purify the world from its pestilential contagion. But here also

the right order must be observed. We may dream that it would be a grand and glorious work, to overcome sin in the world: we may think of sallying out on such an enterprise for the sake of magnifying ourselves by it: all efforts however directed toward such an end will be vain, until we have gone through the far more painful and toilsome task of overcoming sin in ourselves. Without this preparatory discipline we shall soon grow faint and falter; and double shame and bitterness must needs await him, who, having preacht to others, himself becomes a castaway.

The Comforter convinces the world of judgement, because the Prince of this world has been judged. Has the Prince of this world been judged? The Comforter, who is the Spirit of truth, cannot convince of anything except the truth; wherefore it is most certain that the Prince of this world has been judged. And yet . . . and yet . . . when we cast our eyes abroad over the face of the earth, —when we bethink ourselves of what has been going on from the beginning, and is still going on in every part of it, from the royal palace down to the cottage of the husbandman,—when we call to mind what we see and hear and read of every day, what purposes men are professing, what objects they are pursuing undisguisedly, as though no question could be entertained about their propriety and worthiness,—when we pry into our own hearts, and look searchingly back over our past lives, and ask ourselves what our motives and aims have been and are, what our plans and desires have been and are, and where our affections are and have been placed,—can we truly affirm that, according to the evidence which may be drawn from the history of the last eighteen centuries, and from the present state of the world, and according to the witness borne

by our own hearts and minds, the Prince of this world has been judged? Has he been so condemned, that all the world has united to condemn him? Has he been so cast out, that all the world has cast him out? Has the great majority, has any considerable portion of the world, condemned him and cast him out? Has he been condemned and cast out from the councils of kings? from senates? from armies and navies? from the counting-house and the marketplace? Has he been condemned and cast out from our manufactories? Has he been wholly condemned and cast out even from our schools and colleges and universities. Or, to narrow the sphere of our inquiries, have we ourselves, each one of us, condemned him and cast him out? Do we know and feel that he has been judged and condemned and cast out by our Lord and Saviour? and do we, under this conviction, condemn him and cast him out from our own hearts and minds utterly and altogether, so that he has no part in them, no hold upon them, that he never sways our thoughts, never stirs our desires? Have we set ourselves resolutely to eschew all manner of evil, to hate whatever is hateful before God, and to love nothing save what is wellpleasing in His allholy sight? Alas! I am afraid, if we speak the truth, we shall be forced to confess that in this, as in all other things, there is still a broad and glaring contradiction between the order of the world and that order which Christ has appointed and establisht for His Church. Contrariety and contradiction to the order and ordinances of heaven is still the course of this world, as it always has been, ever since that word *No*,—that word which had never been uttered in the courts of heaven until the spirit of pride lifted itself up in rebellion against God,—that word

which is ever echoing back in endless repercussion through the howling caverns of hell,—first disturbed the all-consenting harmony of the universe. Hence it has come to pass that in all parts of the earth, wherever assemblages of men have been gathered together, there has always been a tumultuous jarring of contending voices, ebbing and flowing, rolling to and fro, affirming and denying, as though the body of truth were divided, as though evil were good, and good evil, and as though it were impossible to determine conclusively what is, and what is not. Still thus much is most certain: for the true spiritual Church, built of those lively stones that *offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ*,—for those who, having a living faith in Christ, endeavour to walk in the blessed steps of His allholy life, the Prince of this world has been judged. But so far as the world still continues to exist unsanctified by the Church, with a heart closed against the conviction and the other influences of the Comforter, the Prince of this world has not been judged: or at least the world knows nothing of the judgement which has befallen him, but seats him on the throne of its heart, and bows down to him as blindly as ever. It sets up Dagon again and again, and will even worship the stump of Dagon, rather than believe that he has been judged. Nay, has not the Prince of this world often entered into the very temple of the Lord who judged him? has he not set up the abomination of desolation even in the holy place? And when he does so enter there, his words are ever, that he has not been judged, that he has not been condemned and cast out, that God has made peace with him, that we may worship him, and yet worship God also, that we may serve him with the best part of our hearts,

and yet that the poorest remnant of our service will find acceptance with God.

Your thoughts will have recurred of themselves to that dismal period in the history of the Church, when the Prince of this world put forth all his craft, and far too successfully, to prove that he had not been judged,—nay, when for generations he seemed almost to have usurpt the dominion of the Church,—and when those faithful servants of Christ, who desired to enforce and execute their Lord's judgement against him, were many of them driven out, as in older times, to wander in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. It was an awful spectacle then, to see how the flesh was in almost all things quenching and stifling the spirit, not merely, as it ever does, in the groves and high places of the world, but even in what ought to have been the courts of the house of God. For a time had arrived when the Church had entered into alliance with the world: Herod had said that he would come and worship the King of the Jews; and she believed him. But when Herod, when the Prince of this world, pretends to worship, it is only with the purpose of destroying more subtly and effectually. Trained as he is in all falsehood, he will readily mock the form of worship, if he can thereby empty that form of its spirit; as he did so wofully among the Pharisees in Judea, and as he is ever striving to do, when an inordinate attention is paid to the outward acts of religion. And when the Prince of this world has persuaded men that he has not been judged, his next step has ever been to subvert the Comforter's conviction of righteousness, by making them believe that they may have a righteousness of their own, and do not need the righteousness of Christ. Whence, by a

natural progression, he further undermines the conviction of sin, and shakes all faith in the divine nature and office of Christ. By a like process, in an age of literary pride and epicureanism, he lures his victims through the moonlit mazes of natural religion, into the dark chaotic night of pantheism; in which, confounding all moral distinctions, he cheats men into supposing that there is nothing excellent except power.

But it is not solely when the Church enters into an open alliance with the world, that the Prince of this world attempts to persuade men that he has not been judged. Even when our Lord Himself, the Fulness of the Wisdom and Holiness of the Father, was upon earth, the Tempter came to Him, and would fain have deceived Him: nor has there ever been a state of the Church, in which the Prince of this world has left her unassailed; nor can we expect that the Church ever will be in such a state, until that day when he, who was judged on Calvary, will be cast out altogether from God's world, and will sink into the bottomless pit of his own misery and despair. Thus whenever a spirit of more fervent zeal has breathed through the Church,—when the preachers of the Gospel have been animated with a deeper conviction of the sin of the world, when they have seen more clearly how that sin is rooted in unbelief, and when they have been more earnest in calling their hearers to seek that righteousness, which can only be received as the free gift of grace to faith,—at such times the Prince of this world has ever been busy in sending his emissaries abroad to persuade men that, as the righteousness of Christ, which is given to faith, is a free gift, no way to be earned by any works on the part of the receiver, it cannot matter in the least what our works are,

—that to be scrupulous about our moral conduct is a symptom of selfrighteousness,—and that the best mode of shewing our entire reliance on Christ's righteousness, and our thorough contempt for all that man can do, is to keep on living in sin, without presuming to set up any light of our own by the side of the Sun of Righteousness. Errours of this kind had sprung up and grown rank even in the lifetime of the great Apostle of righteousness, constraining him to warn men against the blasphemous delusion, that they were to continue in sin, in order that grace might abound. In like manner, when Luther took up the apostolic trumpet, and startled the nations, and roused the Church out of her slumber, by proclaiming the same primary doctrine, that man is justified by faith alone, without the works of the Law, the Prince of this world again tried to mock the voice of truth, and said, *Ay, without the works of the Law; therefore trample the Law under foot, lest thy works should interfere with thy faith.* Hence one of the great contests which the heroic Reformer had to wage through the chief part of his life, was against the Antinomian errours whereby the Prince of this world tried to hinder and pervert the Gospel of righteousness. Sometimes too, as man, when driven out of one errour, is sadly prone to rush into its opposite, even they who have rightly discerned how the righteousness of God has been manifested to the world in the incarnation and death of His Son, and who have been earnestly desirous of magnifying Christ in their own lives, have yet been misled by an over-anxious fear of ascribing anything to human merit, into speaking disparagingly of that dutiful obedience, which the redeemed servants of Christ, the adopted children of God, are bound to pay to their Master and Father. But

never, by no single word, does St Paul countenance such a delusion; never, I believe, does Luther, if we weigh his words fairly, with a due attention to the context, and to the uniform tenour of his teaching. It is true, Luther is perpetually inveying, with the utmost vehemence of condemnation, against that deadly heresy of good works, which was then spread over the Church, poisoning the sources of its life. Now in reading such passages, if we forget that the good works which he is thus reprobating, consisted mainly in formal acts of worship and outward penances and mortifications, performed as an expiation for sin, under the notion of their being meritorious, we may easily fancy that his expressions are derogatory to morality; more especially if, with ears unused to any louder sound than that of academic argument, we come on a sudden within the thunder of his battlecry. Nevertheless, so marvellously clear was his insight into the fundamental principles of Christian doctrine, — so thoroughly had he been convinced, above all other men, it would seem, since the apostolic age, of sin and of righteousness and of judgement by the Comforter,—that one may feel some degree of confidence in asserting, that he never,—even in those writings which he poured forth almost wave after wave, and ray after ray, according to the exigencies of the Church, for so many years,—said anything which, if candidly and rightly interpreted, with a due regard to the occasion and circumstances, is repugnant to the truth on this head. Or at all events, if a curious research may discover certain expressions here and there, in which, when contending against the Pelagian errours of the Romish Church, he has not been careful enough so to measure and limit his expressions, as to keep

them from impinging on the proximate portions of the truth, justice would require that, before we make him an offender for a word, we should compare what we may deem objectionable, with the glowing exhortations to bring forth the fruits of love, in which his writings abound. If we do so, we shall find that, while no preacher of the Gospel has been more energetic in denouncing that noxious errour which considers good works as the ground of justification, few have been so earnest and eloquent in enforcing the necessity of good works as the fruits of faith and love, and as a testimony that the Prince of this world has been judged (w).

This form of errour however is not one which has ever gained much currency in the higher and better educated classes of society. The deep and strong religious feeling, which must accompany it, if it be sincere, will seldom be found without some force of character and of intellect: and this in our days will keep a person, who has gone through a course of scholastic discipline, from running into the extravagancies of Antinomianism. But the Prince of this world, we may be sure, will also have his devices for ensnaring those who may seem to belong more especially to his empire, those who, from their more conspicuous station, and from the influence they exercise over their brethren, are not seldom by way of eminence denominated *the world*. The delusion which in these days he is the fondest of, and which the world is much readier to swallow, is one whereby it is pampered in its indolent carelessness and self-indulgence, and whereby it is in like manner beguiled into believing that its Prince has not been judged, or at least that, if he has, his sentence has not been one of condemnation, but acquittal. The worldly notion of

Christianity will mostly amount to something like this,—that it is a scheme of mercy, in which God is pleased to shew forth His forbearance and goodnature,—yes, His goodnature,—I know no other word so well fitted to express what the children of this world regard as the chief attribute of the Christian God,—in pardoning all except very flagrant and outrageous criminals. They look upon Christianity,—may I not say so?—as a scheme for just paring the claws of sin, and then letting it run about at will. My young friends, I am certain there are many amongst you, who will have heard Christianity spoken of in some such manner as this. There are many amongst you, I am certain, whose thoughts, when they have been turned toward religion, will have lulled themselves to sleep by muttering, that God has revealed Himself to us Christians as a God of mercy, and that this is the great difference between our religion and that of the Jews and heathens,—that the knowledge of this constitutes our special privilege and advantage. Nay, my dear friends, are there not some amongst you, who are still lying under this miserable and fatal delusion? are there not some, who still cry *Peace* to your souls, because Christianity is a religion of mercy? Do I then mean to say that it is not a religion of mercy? God forbid! But it is only a religion of mercy, because it is also a religion of truth and of righteousness. It is a religion of mercy, because Mercy in it is met together with Truth: it is a religion of peace, because Peace and Righteousness have kissed each other in it. Else it would not be a religion of mercy. There would be no mercy in Christianity, if God had sent His Onlybegotten Son into the world, to the end that mankind might be allowed to continue in sin. This is the mercy of the

Spirit of evil. The Spirit of evil would have you continue in sin: he would have you go on day by day and year by year heaping sin upon sin, wrapping one poisonous fold after another around you, quaffing one deadly potion after another, until your whole head shall be sick, and your whole heart faint, and nothing shall remain of you except wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. But this is the very proof which God has given of His exceeding mercy, that He has called you out of your sins, that He will not leave you to rot and moulder away in them, that He would draw you out of them, almost in despite of yourselves, by the cords of His love,—yea, that He has called you to a communion with Himself, a communion which can only be enjoyed in proportion as you become like Him,—that He has called you to a share and portion in that which is most glorious and excellent in Himself, to become holy as He is holy, and pure as He is pure, and perfect as He is perfect. Yes, brethren, this is the real proof of God's mercy, that He has commanded you, and will help you, to cast away all manner of sin, the least as well as the greatest; for nothing can be small or to be disregarded, which estranges and cuts you off from God. The world in its cruelty tells you that you may be intemperate, that you may be licentious, that you may be ambitious, that you may be neglectful of all your duties to God, and of almost all your duties to your fellow men, that you may spend your lives in pursuing your own pleasure and your own aggrandizement, and that all the while you may be respectable and estimable and honorable, and may even put in a claim for the crowns of earthly glory. This is the world's mercy, or rather its cruelty. A few vices it bids you beware of,

those which it has been pleased to brand with shame: but every other vice you may indulge in to your heart's content, and need only take care that you do not hurt yourselves by it. God, on the other hand, tells you that you do hurt yourselves, that you hurt your immortal souls, by every sin in which you indulge. For every sin is poison: every sin, the least as well as the greatest, tends to canker and destroy your souls: every sin breeds death, and cuts you off from the communion of the blessed. Therefore does God shew forth His infinite mercy in calling you away from all manner of sin, by sending His Spirit to convince you, not only of sin and of righteousness, but also of judgement, in order that you may not be doomed to follow the Prince of this world into condemnation, but may be fitted more and more for receiving the inheritance which your Saviour has purchast for you, along with the saints in light,—that you may rise more and more out of the darkness of this world into the light of His presence,—and that He may give you every blessing and every grace, grace upon grace, and blessing upon blessing. Yea, He offers Himself to you, His whole beatific fulness: He has given you His Onlybegotten Son: He would give you His allholy Spirit, to dwell and abide in you for ever.

God desires, earnestly desires to give you all these blessings. Doubt not, my young friends, that this is so: believe it with an assurance no less lively and strong than you feel of your own existence, or of the existence of the world around you. It is by doubt, by unbelief, that man still, as ever, frustrates God's gracious dealings. Surely we may most reasonably trust, that He who sent down His Onlybegotten Son to live in

the form of a Servant, and to die on the Cross for mankind, and who sent down His Spirit with such power to the Apostles and the other preachers of the Gospel in the first ages of the Church, had an end very dear to His heart, which He designed to accomplish by these mighty means, and for which, if I may so speak in all reverence, He made these inestimable unimaginable sacrifices. And God is not man, that He should forget what He once purpost, or that He should weary because a work is not readily concluded, or that He should change His mind and cast away what was so precious in His sight. It is true, eighteen hundred years have rolled by, since Christ offered Himself up on the Cross, and since the Comforter came down to the Apostles. But what are eighteen hundred years to Him, before whom a thousand years are as one day? They are as though today and tomorrow had past by with one of the sons of men, and the next day were just about to open upon him. The laws of nature, as they are called, the laws of cohesion and attraction and gravitation, the laws of growth and decay, the laws by which the suns are kept in their spheres, and the planets in their orbits, are the same now as they were eighteen hundred years ago. Much more does the same unchangeableness inhere in God's moral laws, in the laws of His righteousness and love, which were when the outward world was not, and which will continue after the outward world has sunk into its appointed grave. Therefore be not doubtful, but stedfastly believe that God still purposes to give you all those rich treasures of blessing which He gave to our fathers. The Crown of the Saviour is still incomplete; the Marriage-feast of the Lamb is not yet full: the Comforter is still gathering

jewels for that Crown, and calling guests to that Feast; and you may all be among those jewels, in the number of those happy guests. In order that you may be fitted for these blessings hereafter, God still sends His Spirit to all who desire to obtain these heavenly prizes. For you can only obtain them in one way, in the way which God has ordained, which He ordained in the first instance for the whole Church, and for the world when it was to be called into the Church; and which He still ordains for the whole Church, and for every soul incorporated into it. You must be convinced of sin, you must be convinced of righteousness, you must be convinced of judgement, with that living, ruling, practical conviction, which the Spirit of God alone can produce. The Spirit of God is ready to work that conviction in you, in every one of you,—to work it in those in whom it has not been wrought already,—to confirm and strengthen it in those in whom it has. He who sent the Comforter at first to His disciples, still sends Him to His Church, and to every member of His Church. Yes, brethren, to each and every one of you, Christ has sent and will send His Spirit, to convince you of sin and of righteousness and of judgement. Only you must not close, but open your ears and your hearts to receive that conviction; you must not turn away, but listen to it, readily, attentively, patiently; you must give heed to it and endeavour to follow it, to obey it, to rule your lives according to it; above all, you must beware of resisting it, of quenching it, of driving it from you, of doing what it forbids and condemns. You must seek it by prayer, by earnest, fervent, persevering prayer. You must seek it by frequent and searching meditation on the truths which it reveals to you, on

unbelief and faith, on righteousness and unrighteousness, the unrighteousness of man and the righteousness of Christ, and on the victory of the Cross whereby the Prince of this world was judged. In this, as in all things, you must strive diligently and strenuously to act according to the light you have already received, in full reliance on the neverfailing promise that to him who has shall be given. And while you study the mysteries which God has declared to us in the Scriptures, with all your heart and all your mind, you must endeavour to make them the rule and principle of your lives, and to fashion yourselves after that pattern of the mind of God, which was made manifest in every word and deed of His most blessed Son.

In the next verse but two after the text, our Lord, while still speaking of the coming of the Comforter, says, *He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it to you.* This, we have seen, is what the Comforter does through the whole of His threefold work: in every part of it He glorifies Christ. In convincing us of sin, He convinces us of the sin of not believing in Christ. In convincing us of righteousness, he convinces us of the righteousness of Christ, of that righteousness which was made manifest in Christ's going to the Father, and which He received to bestow on all such as should believe in Him. And lastly, in convincing us of judgement, He convinces us that the Prince of this world was judged in the life and by the death of Christ. Thus throughout Christ is glorified; and that which the Comforter shews to us relates in all its parts to the life and work of the Incarnate Son of God. In like manner all the graces which the Spirit bestows, are the graces which

were manifested in the life of Christ. It is Christ's love that He shews to us and gives to us, the love through which Christ laid down His life for His Church,—and Christ's joy in His communion with His Father,—and the peace which Christ had when He had overcome the world,—and Christ's longsuffering in praying that His murderers might be forgiven,—and Christ's bounty in giving of all the treasures of heaven,—and the faithfulness of Him who is the faithful Witness, Himself the Truth,—and the gentleness with which Christ took up little children in His arms and blest them,—and Christ's meekness in never answering again,—and the temperance of Christ, who made it His meat and drink to do the will of His Father. All these graces were manifested upon earth in their heavenly perfection, when the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in the Man Christ Jesus; and all these graces the Spirit of God desires to give to all who believe in Christ Jesus. All these graces He desires to give to every one of you, so that Christ may be formed in you, and that your life may be swallowed up in His life. Thus shall you too glorify Christ; and with Him you will glorify the Father. Let this be the glory which you seek, not your own vain fleeting glory, but the glory wherewith you may glorify Christ and the Father; and this glory shall abide with you for ever.

The Comforter will convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgement. This passage has supplied us with food for godly meditation during several Sundays; and how far are we from having exhausted it! Rather do we seem to have been merely skimming over the surface, diving down now and then a little way, while unfathomable depths were stretching below us. Such do we ever find

to be the case in studying the Scriptures. The more light and comfort we derive from them, the more clearly do we discern how far that light and comfort fall short of what we might derive, if we gave up our hearts and minds to them with a more entire faith. O that these same words might supply us with food for godly meditation through the whole of our lives! Yea, when we arise from the grave, may the first thought that dawns on our reawakening souls, be the thought of Christ our Righteousness! May this thought abide with us through eternity, brightening evermore as we gain a clearer insight into the inexhaustible riches of that righteousness! And when the vision of our earthly lives flits across our spirits, when we look back,—if the blessed ever look back,—to this world and its trials, may our foremost thoughts and feelings be those of thankfulness to the Comforter who convinced us of sin, and to Him by whom the Prince of this world was judged!

To Him therefore, the gracious Comforter, who convinces us of sin and of righteousness and of judgement, and to Jesus Christ, the Lord of our faith, and our Righteousness, by whom the Prince of this world was judged, and to the blessed Father, who vouchsafes to send His Son and His Spirit for the redemption and sanctification of mankind, be all praise and thanksgiving and glory and adoration, from angels and saints, world without end.

THE CHURCH THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD:

A SERMON

PREACHT IN THE CHAPEL

OF THE PALACE AT LAMBETH,

ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 7th, 1840,

AT THE CONSECRATION

OF

THE RIGHT REVEREND CONNOP THIRLWALL,

LORD BISHOP OF ST DAVID'S.

TO HIS GRACE

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,

THIS SERMON,

PRINTED AT HIS DESIRE,

IS HUMBLY DEDICATED,

IN SINCERE RESPECT AND THANKFULNESS

FOR THE MILD WISDOM

WITH WHICH, DURING A TIME OF DIFFICULTY AND TROUBLE,

HE HAS PRESIDED OVER OUR CHURCH,

SEEKING PEACE AND ENSUING IT.

THE CHURCH THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

MATTHEW v. 14.

Ye are the light of the world.

As there is scarcely a verse in the New Testament, which has not afforded ground for some difference of opinion,—as there are few about which some sort of controversy has not been stirred,—so it has been made a matter of argument with regard to the Sermon on the Mount, to whom our Lord's words are to be considered as mainly and immediately addrest. Yet here, as everywhere else, we find the same pervading characteristic of His teaching, its universality. This is one of the marks which distinguish the words of inspiration from the profoundest and subtilest of such as have proceeded from man's natural understanding. Herein, above all, did He speak as never man spake. Hereby did He shew that His words came straight from the eternal Fountain of truth; the waters of which are afterwards divided, and compass all lands, refreshing and fertilizing each, but, when He is speaking, flow close around the trees of knowledge and of life. What Jesus says, does not apply solely to certain individuals, to certain classes, to the men of a single generation. The expressions which the Psalmist makes use of in describing the testimony borne by the outward world to the glory of its Maker, become literally true, when applied to Him: *His voice is gone out through all the earth, and His words to the end of*

the world. When He speaks of the natural man, He reveals the secrets which lie hid in every heart, and which have lain hid in every heart from the Fall of Adam down to this day; so that it would almost seem to us at times as though He must have been looking straight into our own hearts,—as though what would appear to have been said in immediate contemplation of our special weaknesses and wants, can hardly be equally true of any one else. On the other hand, when He is speaking of those whom He has called to a knowledge of His redemption and salvation, and who have listened to that call, the glorious and blessed things declared of them are glories and blessings which belong to every true member of His Church; in a higher degree, it may be, to some, in a lower to others, but more or less, so far as rests with our Lord's own purpose, to all. Every member of His Church is invited to receive all the glories and all the blessings of the Kingdom of Heaven. On every member does our Lord desire to pour them all forth. If we all fall short of this consummation,—if so many betoken that no more than a very scanty portion of grace has ever found way into their souls,—if so many even in the midst of Christian lands, even among the baptized members of Christ's Church, appear to be utterly destitute of His bounteous gifts,—the fault lies wholly in ourselves, in our own inability and unwillingness to receive, not in our Lord's unwillingness or inability to give.

To this universality, which marks our Lord's teaching, it is owing in great measure that His words have been interpreted in so many ways. It is not thus with the words of men. Their meaning we mostly see clearly; and all are agreed about it: if not, we feel sure that there must

be some mistake, or corruption, as we term it, in the words, or else that the writer has been deficient in distinctness of thought or of expression. Not that men's words are clearer; not that they are more definite; not that they come home to our hearts and minds with such a radiant power of truth, as our Lord's do. But they have a narrowness, a limitedness, a superficialness of meaning, which we soon get at, and soon exhaust. We see into them, and through them, and often, it may be, beyond them: we perceive the circumstances which suggested them, the combinations of thought out of which they sprang. Whereas, who ever exhausted the meaning of the simplest of our Lord's sayings? Who could ever feel that he had got to the bottom in them, and that there was nothing more to be learnt than what he had learnt already? that there was only this one pearl, and that the shell might now be flung away? Surely the shell has the power of producing fresh pearls, each more precious than the other. The more we study our Lord's words, the further we pierce into them, the more are we compelled to acknowledge that here also we see only in part, and that, after the learning and wisdom and piety of eighteen centuries have been poring over the New Testament, and prying into every corner of it, there are still untold treasures of truth in it, which no eye has ever yet seen, no heart ever yet conceived, — treasures to enrich another hundred generations, and which a thousand would not drain.

Thus for instance, what can be simpler than the words of the text? *Ye are the light of the world.* And yet what hidden depths of meaning, what unfulfilled riches of prophecy, are contained in these few words! When we fix our thoughts attentively upon them, we discern that they

are most undoubtedly true, — that to a certain extent they are true at this day, and have always been true more or less, from the very hour when they were first spoken. Nevertheless do we not feel at the same time with shame and sorrow that they are not true, that they are very, very far from true, that they have never yet been true, that there has never been a single day, never a single spot on the face of the earth, with regard to which it could be said that the whole meaning of these simple words had come to pass? He who is like a bridegroom, does indeed come forth from his chamber, day after day, and year after year, and runs his race rejoicingly from the end to the end of the heavens; and nothing is hid from his light. Every day it may be said of him, that he is the light of this world; and though that light is sometimes overcast and bedimmed, still he is the light of this world; and often and often does that light shine in full effulgent glory. But our Lord in the text is evidently speaking to men, to a body of men. He says not, *The sun is the light of the world:* He says, *Ye are the light of the world.* Yet of what body of men can it be affirmed that they have ever been the light of the world, so as to be comparable in the diffusiveness of their illumination to the dimmest sun in the year?

Still, as I just said, when we meditate on these words, we cannot but recognize that they are indeed true; that in the course of a few years they became eminently true of divers among the persons to whom our Lord was speaking; that divers of those persons became and have continued to be the light of the world ever since; that further other persons, standing more or less in the same relation to our Lord in which they stood, have also more or less

been the light of the world ever since; nay, that, were it not for that light of the world, which is here spoken of, the whole world would have been sitting ever since in darkness and in the shadow of death, unless indeed it had mouldered away, and sunk from the shadow of death into the reality.

Ye are the light of the world. It would lead to a disquisition ill suited to the present occasion, if I were to examine the opinions which have been proposed concerning the persons meant in these words; inasmuch as this verse cannot be separated from the rest of the Sermon on the Mount; nor can we restrict its application, unless we in like manner restrict that of the whole. Hence it would be requisite to determine to whom our Lord is speaking throughout this divine promulgation of His doctrine. But although this would lengthen our enquiry, almost every step in it would tend to strengthen the conviction that these words, in their widest, fullest sense, must be understood as embracing the whole of Christ's Church (x). After our Lord has said, *Ye are the light of the world*, He adds immediately, *A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid:* least of all can it be hid if it be a city of light, if it bear any likeness to the city described in the Revelation as descending out of heaven, lightened by the glory of God, with the Lamb for its light. To this end did God set His Church upon His holy hill of Zion, and shewed it all the kingdoms of the earth, and the glory thereof,—in order that it might shine before those kingdoms, and glorify them with a true glory, undazzled and unbeguiled by their false glory, and glorifying them with His glory, with the glory of faith and of holiness and of love, with the glory wherewith the Father from the

beginning glorified the Son, and wherewith the Son, when He was upon earth, glorified the Father. This is the purpose for which the Church was set upon God's holy hill; and for the fulfilment of this purpose she was commanded to shine as the light of the world. So too has she. However her light has been obscured or interrupted, still she has been the light of the world, ever since her Lord pronounced her to be so: and so far as there has been any pure living light in the world since Christ went up into heaven, it has been gathered primarily into the Church, and from thence has spread itself abroad.

Yet the children of this world, we know, are apt to deny this, in these latter days more especially. This our age boasts itself of being the most enlightened that has ever shone upon earth, since the intellect of man first crept out of the womb of darkness. Indeed this is its one boast, its peculiar pride. It will not call itself the most virtuous of all ages, or the most heroic, or even the wisest, much less the holiest and godliest; but it defies us to question its being the most enlightened. At the same time they who vaunt the loudliest of this enlightenment, would be the last to acknowledge that it proceeds from the Church. Rather do they assert that the Church hates the light, and fears it, and checks it, and keeps out of it, and would fain keep all mankind out of it. Nevertheless it is most certain that whatever light there may now be in the world, has issued in the first instance from the Church, even that which has exalted itself in rivalry against her, even that which has attempted to set fire to her and destroy her. Most certain is it, that, had not Christ set up his Church to be the light of the world, we should be pining in outer darkness; or, it may be,

the race of man would have rotted away long ago from the face of the earth.

Thus much indeed has often been acknowledged by those who have set themselves to meditate, with philosophical insight and an earnest love of truth, on the development and growth of the human mind, as exemplified, whether, on the widest scale, in the history of the human race, or, more narrowly and distinctly, in the history of those nations which have risen successively to the greatest highth in the firmament of knowledge,—that religion has been the original source of whatsoever light has manifested itself among them. In the intellectual and in the moral world, no less than in the natural and the spiritual, it is the idea of God that first utters the organizing fiat, that first says, *Let there be light:* it is the idea of God, that first divides the light from the darkness. Even our own minds, if we observe and examine them carefully, may convince us of this truth. It is the idea of God, that lifts us out of the eddying flux and reflux of time, and fixes our being on that which is firm and lasting. It is the idea of God, that forms the first sustaining link in the chain of our thoughts, otherwise endless and beginningless,—that supplies a stedfast anchor for our shifting and drifting feelings,—that imposes a binding law on the tumultuous surges of our will. In fact this is what raises man above the beasts of the field; this is what constitutes him a reasonable being; this is the first essential act of reason,—that he can say, *There is a God.* As the fear of God is the beginning of all moral wisdom, and as it has ever been felt that the sanction of the Divine Idea is indispensable to the upholding of human law, — not merely for the sake of striking terrour by the assurance of

future retribution, but still more because it is in the Divine Idea that all necessary and compulsory truth must be grounded,—in like manner the same sanction is no less indispensable to every process of human thought, to all knowledge, to all wisdom, to all morality, to all duty. A people utterly destitute of that Idea could never emerge from the most abject barbarism; and in proportion as a nation loses its hold thereon, it sinks back into a like barbarism. Through that Idea do we first feel that we have a sacred bond of union and fellowship with our brethren, with our fathers, with the world around us, with all who have been and are to be,—that we are members of a family, of a nation, of a race,—that the truths which our reason and conscience discern, unsubstantial and fleeting as they may seem, are rooted in eternity,—that no human breath begat them,—that no decay will wear them out, — that no oblivion will abolish them; yea, that, though the heavens and the earth shall pass away, no truth shall ever cease to be; and that the only effect which Time can produce with regard to Truth, is to draw away more and more of the veil which hides it from our eyes.

This is not the place to shew how Religion, even in its imperfect and corrupt forms, has been the sole parent of art and knowledge. It was only when the heart and mind of man had found an utterance for their inmost yearnings in the truth of truths, *There is a God*, that man was enabled to perceive how he had a higher calling, a nobler exercise for his faculties, than that of providing for the gross wants of the moment, or of dealing with the immediate objects of the senses. Then alone could he set himself to embody his ideas in outward forms, to construct

buildings for higher purposes than that of shelter, buildings which should typify the temple of the universe, or the heavenward aspirations of devotion. Then did he recognize that every faculty and feeling wherewith he was gifted were capable of an ideal perfection, and that this perfection might be exprest in the lineaments of the form, in the hues and features of the countenance. Then did he become aware that the ear also is the organ of a divine world as well as the eye, and that the harmony of sounds, as well as of visible objects, declares the glory of Him, who makes all things work together for the fulfilment of His eternal will. In like manner it is by the Divine Idea, by some modification or other of the faith in a living God, that all true poetry and philosophy are vivified and upheld and exalted. In the greatest poets and philosophers that Idea has been the ruling principle of their thoughts, in some more latent, in others brought forth more distinctly and explicitly into the light of consciousness. By it have they been taught that there is something in man greater than man has ever realized, the germs of an excellence far surpassing what had ever been seen in him; and on the other hand that there is a taint of death in him, a spirit of rebellion against the heavenborn laws, which ensures its own destruction,—that all sin is death, that all wilfulness is death, and that the only life for the will lies in its subjection to a higher order and law. By it moreover have they learnt that the course of events is so overruled, as to set forth the glory and to establish the dominion of that law, to fulfill it both by life and by death, and to be at once purificatory of evil, and destructive of it.

In following out these hints, we might be enabled

to discern how, even among the heathens, so far as there was any light, the Idea of God was the light of the world. That Idea was refracted indeed manifoldly by the mediums through which it past: it was often grossly obscured and distorted by carnal admixture and defilement: but no nation ever lifted its head out of barbarism, except through the elevating power of faith in that Idea; and the culminant point in the history of every nation, — the period when it has reacht the greatest highth, not perhaps of outward force and of sensual refinement, but of moral wisdom and dignity, — has been that when the Divine Idea has exprest itself the most clearly and powerfully in the national heart and life. Thus even among the heathens this was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. But this Light shone in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. It shone upon a world lying under a thick heavy black mass of sin; and these clouds resisted the light, and bedimmed it, and would only allow a few faint broken gleams to pierce through. The better and wiser part of mankind, they who were richest in the precious wisdom bred by rectitude of purpose, felt assured that there was a God, a God whom they did not know. The ruder multitude confounded the few gleams of divine light with the corrupt idols in which their sense-bound fancies had entombed it. And the men who boasted of their worldly wisdom, and whose chief pride lay in being above the vulgar, knowing that the idols were of man's own making, deemed that the gleams of light in them were also his, and therefore spurious and fictitious; and thus they sank into still deeper darkness, from which all heavenly light was studiously and obstinately shut out.

Such was the state of the chief part of the world, when it pleased God that the true Light, the same Light which from the beginning had lighted every man that came into the world, should take up its abode upon earth in all its purity, enshrined in the form of Jesus of Nazareth, and that from Him a new stream of light should be poured to the furthest corners of the earth, being borne from country to country by those whom He sent as the messengers and heralds of that light, by those whom in the text He declares to be *the light of the world.* Through the light which flowed from their teaching, and through the power of the Spirit working along with their words upon the hearts of mankind, the world rose a second time out of the moral chaos into which it had been rapidly sinking: it rose a second time in a diviner form, with graces till then undreamt of. The light which was thus spread over it, was primarily and in the main a spiritual light. As such however, it was also a moral light; for no one can have any real spiritual illumination, but that illumination will enable him to discern the true character of the relations whereby man is connected with his brethren: and this is the only light which will give him a right survey of those relations: the light which does so must come from above. Moreover, as the light which comes down from heaven, is not a cold barren snowlight or icelight, merely opening a field for the eye to wander in, but is full of penetrating, cheering, lifegiving warmth, thus the light which comes from Christ does not merely enlighten our mental eye, but, so far as it does indeed come from Him, pervades our whole nature, and manifests itself in the light of a holy life, no less than in moral and spiritual intuitions.

Again, this spiritual light, as such, was also an intellectual light. It was both at once, both a moral and an intellectual light, and is the only light which can be both at once, as being the common source of both. It was both at once potentially from the beginning, although in the first instance it only illumined the higher parts of our nature. In the early years of Christianity men were content with knowing their relation to God,—that of their fallen outcast nature, and that of their nature reconciled to Him and glorified by the participation of His Son; and they lookt at all their duties as emanating out of that relation. The converts, coming mostly, not from among the wise and prudent, not from among those who had stored themselves with the learning and wisdom of this world, but rather from among the simple and lowly, had little inclination or fitness for human studies; or if any of them had more of such fitness, yet, having found the Pearl of great price, they had sold all that they had to obtain it; and when they had obtained it, they thought only of winning others to do likewise. Indeed the primary act of the Church was necessarily to convert the world, to carry the light of the Gospel from land to land on the wings of the morning. Not until the light had fully risen, and taken possession of the heavens and the earth, did men resume their ordinary worldly pursuits and occupations. Not until Christianity had been establisht in a nation as the one dominant religion, could the Church set about the task of reorganizing a body of knowledge, of pouring her vivifying and purifying light through all the powers and capacities of thought, which were slumbering in the minds of men, so as to rouse them to exercise themselves in the various provinces of art and science. Then it was that

Theology came forward as the queen of the sciences, which gathered around her as her handmaids. The Church became the parent and the fosterer of the arts and sciences; and whatever was excellent in each manifested the power of the Divine Idea, with which the mind of man was impregnated. Architecture was inspired to raise buildings to God, wherein the congregation of His people might gather in multitudes to worship Him. Music calmed and lifted up the heart in manifold strains of prayer and praise. Painting set forth the Incarnate Son of God, His birth, His life, His death, the revelations of His presence in His saints. Science busied itself in tracing the workings of God's laws in the multitudinous objects of the creation. Philosophy meditated on the deep mysteries of the Godhead, and endeavoured to arrange the truths of Revelation in logical order and sequence, and to shew that they had been written from the beginning by the finger of God on the human reason and conscience, although defaced in all manner of ways, and bescribbled over and over with man's palimpsestic writings. Thus throughout the middle ages it was made apparent, that, even with regard to human knowledge, the Church is the light of the world.

At this day too one can hardly cast one's eyes over the map of the earth, to pick out those nations which are in any way eminent in power and knowledge, without being struck by the grand fact, that they are all to be sought and found within the pale of Christendom. The possession of Christian truth, — even the mere intellectual possession of it in that sorry imperfect state in which alone it is anywhere found generally prevalent,— raises a nation at once in the scale of humanity, gives it a stable foundation for all its edifices of thought, teaches

it the right measure, the purpose and true object of its feelings, certifies it of its duties. It opens the ears of Conscience to discern the hidden harmony of the spheres, which otherwise is unheard, except when uttering itself from time to time in the thunder of positive law. The brief efflorescence of literature and science among the Mahometans, which itself was attributable in great measure to the portions of Christian truth mixt up with the errours of the Koran, or at all events to the lively conviction of the Divine Unity, past away long ago. Throughout the regions of Paganism the mind of man has stagnated into a dead sea. Thus it is only in Christian nations that we find anything like an ebb and flow of the waves of thought. A closer examination too would convince us that, in proportion as the mind of a nation is vividly imprest with the speculative truths of the Christian revelation, in the same proportion does it excell in the higher exercises of the human intellect, in poetry and philosophy. The operation of this law has manifested itself in a series of examples by the intellectual ascension and declension of the same nation in the modern world: and that deeper knowledge of Christian verity, that purer spiritual light, which has been bestowed on Protestant Europe, has also produced a higher tone of moral feeling, and a profounder insight into those dark questions, which puzzle and perplex us whenever we try to look into the constitution of our own hearts and minds (Y).

But, if this be so, how can any one assert, or at all events find credence in asserting, that the light of human knowledge is wholly independent of the light of religious truth? nay, that there is a kind of opposition between them, so that each has a tendency to extinguish the other, and

shines the brightest when alone? That such things are said, and that they are thought much oftener than they are said, is notorious; although they may not always be enunciated in such distinct broad propositions: and still more notorious is it, that on each side there has long existed in many minds no slight jealousy of the other. Nor can it be disputed, that there have been divers circumstances in the more recent history of literature, which, if taken by themselves, without regard to their causes and connexion, might seem to afford ground for such a notion. Men who have made an open profession of infidelity, have exhibited considerable acuteness in various departments of science: others have glittered with spangles of wit, or have even soared with no feeble wing into the higher regions of poetry. These facts, it is argued, prove that our intellectual life is wholly independent of our moral and spiritual life, and that the arts and sciences would flourish just as well in a world in which men lived wholly without the knowledge of God. Here however it is requisite to draw certain distinctions. That parental love, which is indispensable to foster the growth of our hearts and minds, no less than of our bodies, in infancy and childhood, will not be equally indispensable, when we have attained to the strength of manhood. Nay, we may cast it off, and rebell against it; although we cannot do so without a violent disruption of our moral being; and although the condition of our hearts would be far healthier, if the fountain which fed them in youth, were still to refresh them in after years. In like manner the intellectual faculties, which have grown up under the training of religion, which would never have grown up without that training, which without it would never have discerned the unity of the

universe, and the necessity of its laws, or the moral dignity of human nature, still, having once been impregnated with these ideas, may deal with them regardlessly of their original source. Hence whatever there may be of higher life in the works of infidelity, has flowed into them from the thoughts of former ages, and from that atmosphere of purer thought, with which in a Christian country every man is surrounded; for no man, however he may desire it, can cut himself off from his fathers and his brethren. Nor would we by any means be understood as denying that the children of this world are often wise in their generation. We are warned that there is an earthly wisdom as well as a heavenly, a wisdom of the serpent, as well as the wisdom of God: the very flames of hell mimic the light of heaven. Several of our faculties too, of a more outward, superficial character, and chiefly conversant with that which is outward and superficial, have no immediate apparent connexion with our moral and spiritual being. This however we do affirm without scruple, that in all the works of infidelity there is a taint of disease and of death, a taint which becomes deeper and more inveterate in proportion as the infidelity is grosser; and that this is the only thing about them referable to infidelity as its source. Science, in the hands of infidelity, degenerates into crumbling materialism: it is blind to the beauty, deaf to the harmony of the universe: as its objects rise, it sinks: when it comes to treat of human nature, its views are base and degrading: its morality is a matter of barter, or a wary drifting along before the animal impulses. And what can the poetry of infidelity be, except a deifying of the senses and the passions? while the consciousness of higher cravings and aspirations, which

cannot be wholly extinguisht, vents itself in bursts of self-mockery, or in the cold sneer of derision and contempt for all mankind. Thus, when the world has turned away from the Church, which was ordained to be its light, it has reeled to and fro beneath the glare of its own volcanic fires, and has tottered on the brink of utter darkness and desolation.

Here we cannot refrain from asking, why has the world turned away from the light of the Church? why has not the Church more adequately fulfilled her heavenly calling of being the light of the world? It is not enough to say that the pride and stiffneckedness of the world has been the cause of this: for the very end for which our Lord sent forth His ministers, was to humble this pride, and to bend this stiffneckedness. Why then has the Church failed so sadly in this her work? and why does the world in these latter ages seem to have become prouder and more stiffneckt than ever? Immediately before the passage in which our Lord calls His disciples *the light of the world*, He had told them of another part of their glorious office: *Ye are the salt of the earth.* So that the Church has this twofold duty, to be the salt of the earth, and to be the light of the world. The close connexion, which is thus establisht between these two declarations, betokens their essential unity; and what God has joined, man cannot put asunder. Yet it is so much more tempting to our human desires to be the light of the world, than to be the salt of the earth,—light is so bright, is seen so far off, while the working of salt is imperceptible,—that men in all ages have been far more willing to be the one than the other. Most certain however is it, that, unless the Church be the salt of the earth, she cannot be the light of

the world: unless she labour humbly and selfsacrificingly to purify men from their sins, she cannot deliver them from their errours. The sin which is left behind will breed fresh errours, and will pervert and distort every truth; for this is the one source of darkness, from which all errours are exhaled. Therefore, if the world has turned away from the light of the Church, we are bound to confess with penitent shame that this cannot have been without grievous fault on the part of the Church: else they who are against us would not have seemed more powerful than He who is for us.

Confining our view however to the second office of the Church, that of being the light of the world, if we enquire how she has fulfilled it with reference to the various provinces of human thought and knowledge, we perceive that there is a remarkable difference between the position occupied by the Church during the last century and a half, and that which she had maintained previously. In the earlier ages of the Church, from the time when she first began to deal with any knowledge beyond that which specially belonged to her heavenly commission, the chief part of the knowledge in the world was engrost by those who were her appointed ministers and teachers. The clergy were the only learned body, taking learning in its widest sense, as embracing philosophical and scientific, along with historical and philological knowledge. This was not a desirable state of things; but it was inevitable. Learning must begin with the few, and can only spread by degrees to the many; and the fact of its beginning with the ministers of religion in every nation bears witness to the truth urged above, that religion is the source of all secular knowledge. This lasted throughout the middle

ages; and even when the diffusion of learning was growing more general, and became one of the instrumental causes which God vouchsafed to make use of for the reformation and purification of His Church, still for a century and a half the clergy continued to be the most learned body in Europe, the first decidedly in that which is more especially called learning, and able to exercise a controlling and formative influence over philosophy and science. Thus philosophy, from the time when it sprang up anew among the schoolmen, down to the latter half of the seventeenth century, was in the main Christian philosophy; and science was Christian science. But no one will affirm that this has been the predominant character of philosophy and science, either in England regarded by itself, or in the whole of Europe, during the last hundred and fifty years. On the contrary it is well known that they who have devoted themselves to philosophical or scientific speculations, have many of them been indifferent, and not a few hostile to Revelation. They have been led by their habitual studies to apply a logical calculus ill suited to moral truth; and they have fancied they have discovered incongruities and contradictions between the conclusions they have arrived at by what they deemed incontrovertible processes of reasoning, and certain propositions supposed to be essential parts of the Scriptures. In many of these persons doubtless there was a strong moral obliquity, by which their intellectual vision was also greatly distorted: but Christian candour forbids our declaring that this was the sole cause of every aberration. Indeed nothing but the most presumptuous selfcomplacent ignorance would venture to assert this, the ignorance which thinks it can maintain its position by

exclaiming that philosophy and science are destructive of faith, unbelieving, and tend to atheism.

Were this indeed so, what a broad deep gulf would yawn before us! When we look at the surface of the history of the human mind during the last two centuries, without bethinking ourselves what it had been in earlier ages, we might almost fancy,— and too many have not scrupled to affirm,—that the truths of Reason are at variance with those of Revelation, that the volume of nature and the volume of history contradict the volume of God's word, and that the only way of cleaving to the last is to close and fling away the other two. Yet this is impossible. Man cannot disbelieve that, which the legitimate exercise of all his faculties compells him to acknowledge. He is so framed that Reason is the lord of his mind; and intellectually he must obey it. This does not arise from the corruption of his nature, but is a relic of his better state; the effects of the Fall having been far more injurious to his moral being, than to his understanding. Therefore to recognize the absolute repugnance and irreconcilableness of reason and science and learning with Revelation is tantamount to saying that Revelation is indeed only designed for the simple and ignorant, and that the wise and prudent are constrained, not by the perversion, but by the right use of their wisdom and prudence, to reject it. Hereby a broad line of demarcation would be drawn, the line which separates ignorance from knowledge; and it would be declared that whoever passes that line must pass from faith into unbelief. Thus the Church ceases to be the light of the world, her advocates themselves urging in her behalf, that she can only shine like a glow-worm amid darkness. Surely this is very different from

the free and reasonable service required by the Gospel. This cannot be the approach to the dwelling of Him, who is Light, and in whom is no darkness at all. The Gospel is not the enslaver and downtreader of reason, but its deliverer and fulfiller. Nor can it be that any one part of God's works shall give the lie to any other part. It may indeed often behove us to shew how the conclusions legitimately drawn from the premisses with which our lower faculties supply us, though relatively correct, and consistent with their premisses, become incorrect when we take a different and higher point of view; how the apparent stability of the earth is no way incompatible with its real motion, nor the apparent motion of the sun with its rest; how that which seems true is indeed true relatively, and how this apparent truth is not overthrown, but establisht, by the higher truth which comprehends it. Thus alone shall we effectively refute the irreligious philosophy and the irreligious science of the age. Thus alone can we convince the gainsayers. We cannot convince them by merely gainsaying them, by denying that, which they feel certain, on grounds to their minds quite conclusive, must be true. We must untie and unravel the knot in their minds: pulling at it roughly tightens it. We can only convince them by teaching them that the truths which they believe, although relatively true, change their aspect when viewed from above; by shewing them that what they deem a mere nebula, proves, when seen through the right telescope, to be a cluster of stars.

This then is the great office of the Church in her relation to the intellectual world: but this office, I am afraid, she can hardly be said to have fulfilled during the last century and a half. She has not kept ahead of the age;

and therefore she has been unable to lead the age. The clergy have not maintained their original position as the vanguard of the human mind in its voyages of discovery into the region of unknown thoughts: nor have they kept their post as surveyors and regulators of these discoveries, systematizing and mapping them, not merely according to their bearings on each other, but above all in their relation to heaven. Even in England they have not done this, and still less in other countries of Europe. When the clergy in these latter days have been eminent, as very many have been, in science or learning, it has been too much as mere scholars and men of science. They have not sufficiently kept their highest vocation in mind. They have not remembered that every thought also must be brought into subjection to Christ. They have not been zealous and diligent enough in shewing that the revealed word of God is the lodestar, the key, and the complement to all other knowledge,—that without it all other knowledge must be grievously incorrect and imperfect,—that the Bible, and the Bible alone, will reconcile and harmonize and justify, all that seems jarring and startling and revolting in the rest of man's experience and observation. This is what it behoves the Church to demonstrate to mankind; and this task in our days is one of peculiar difficulty, owing to the vast compass of the recently conquered provinces of science, and still more to the confusion and perversion of principles so prevalent in modern schools of philosophy. Yet, the greater the difficulty, the more important is it to the wellbeing of the Church and of mankind that the work should be thoroughly accomplisht;—that Theology should again stand forth, as in days of old, the queen of the sciences,—that Philosophy should be her earthly

vicegerent, her other self,—and that all the voices of nature and of history should be shewn to join in full concord with the revealed word of God. Until the Church has achieved this great work, she cannot lay claim to having executed her mission as the light of the world.

We have been considering one out of many ways in which the Church is ordained to fulfill this her glorious calling. For she is to be the light of the world, as we saw above, not merely intellectually, but also morally and spiritually. Indeed it is as the source of spiritual and moral light that she is called by her Lord the light of the world. Her intellectual light is derivative from her higher light, and entirely subordinate thereto. Thus it is a subordinate portion of her office that we have been contemplating; and yet even this portion, how glorious is it! so glorious, that one of the highest objects which the ambition of man has ever striven after, has been to become, not the light of the world, but the light of some small part of the earth, with reference to some one particular field of knowledge. The Church however is to shine as the light of the world, not merely with the light of knowledge; she is to shine with the light of holiness; she is to shine with the light of good works, so that men may glorify her Lord; she is to shine with the light of faith, with the light of her Lord shining through her.

The office of being the light of the world, it was observed above, belongs to the whole Church: it belongs, in a greater or less degree, to every individual member of the Church. I have been led by the occasion to speak chiefly of the part which the clergy ought to bear in the discharge of this office, a part which in old days they well fulfilled in this kingdom, as the renowned names of Bede,

and Scotus Erigena, and Duns, and Alexander Hales, and Occam, and Bradwardin, the meek Primate of our Church, and Roger Bacon bear witness. In later times too, when knowledge began to be more generally diffused, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, what a host of learned and thoughtful no less than holy men were raised up for the purifying and enlightening and edifying of the Church in this land! Not that it is any way to be wisht that the clergy should absorb and monopolize the learning and knowledge of a nation. This could only be the case in an early immature age, and now is neither possible, nor desirable. Still even now, if the body of knowledge is to be rightly organized, if all the sciences are to preserve their orderly harmonious course, insphered in theology, each to the other uttering speech and shewing knowledge, it would assuredly be fitting that they, who from their peculiar calling are bound to hold the most diligent, studious, meditative communion with the word of God, should also be able to prove how what is deepest in all knowledge is rooted in that word, and what is highest rises toward it. Unless they do so, secular knowledge will be apt to become profane knowledge. But when they who are set to be the teachers of heavenly things, are careful to shew how earthly things are made after the pattern of the heavenly, and how the whole creation is waiting for the divine redemption, then every member of the Church may safely make the most of the gift he has received, and ought to do so, if he do it with the ever-present consciousness of belonging to that body which is ordained to be the light of the world. They who have eaten of the Tree of Life,—they, and they alone, may fearlessly pluck the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge.

And as every member of the Church, who has received any intellectual light, is called to let that light shine before men to the glory of God, still more is every member of the Church called to bear his part, according to the ability bestowed on him, in fulfilling her office of being the light of the world, by manifesting the light of faith, and the light of holiness, and the light of every spiritual grace, and the light of good works. Every member of the Church, who has received any of Christ's light into his soul, is bound to shew forth that light in such manner and form as his condition and circumstances shall point out. Indeed he cannot help doing so. Light cannot stay at home: it will not, cannot hide itself: it must pour itself forth so that others may partake of it. But although every Christian is called to bear part in that great orb of light wherewith the Church is to enlighten the world, this office and work belong more especially to such as are appointed to the preaching of that word, which is itself the light of the world. They are to be the lights of the world, by bearing the good tidings of salvation through every region of the earth, by preaching the Gospel to every nation, by calling every child of man to the knowledge and love of God, as made manifest in the person of His Incarnate Son. They are to be the lights of the world, by shining before the eyes of the people as patterns of faith and of holiness. They are to be the lights of the world, as we have already seen, by convincing the gainsayers, by laying bare all the thoughts and works of darkness, and by calling men away from these to the thoughts and works of light.

Yet here again there is a distinction of offices, as there is a distinction of orders and gifts. Those who are placed in authority over their brethren, have a still more stirring

call to be the lights of the world, even as they are more especially set upon a hill, and stand more conspicuously, so that they cannot be hid. In all the ways just spoken of are they called to be the lights of the world, and in other ways also peculiar to themselves. They are to be the lights of the world, by the wisdom of their doctrine. They are to be the lights of the world, by their judicious choice of persons fit to serve God in the various offices of the ministry. They are to be the lights of the world, by the vigilance of their discipline. They are to be the lights of the world, by watching diligently over the purity of teaching in the Church. In England moreover, by a special appointment, which is among the singular blessings of our wonderful constitution, they are ordained to be the lights of the Legislature,—a task of the utmost difficulty and delicacy, but of no less responsibility and importance. By this charge they are bound to call away the Legislature from petty, personal, party views, and to fix its thoughts and aims upon high Christian principles; to lift it up from the considerations of a temporary, shifting, not seldom groveling expediency, to that which is eternally right and true, to justice, to fortitude, to magnanimity, to charity. By this charge they are commanded to proclaim instantly and constantly, that the business of human laws is in all things, as closely and faithfully as may be, to express the will of the supreme Lawgiver. By this charge they are set on high as the special guardians of Christ's chosen flock, the poor, to see that the welfare of those who have no voice or power of their own, shall not be neglected amid the jar and clash of political strife, and that the state be mindful of its paramount duty to provide for all the wants, temporal, moral, and spiritual, of its whole people.

But who is sufficient for these things? Of himself assuredly no man: not the most piercing intellect; not the most comprehensive learning; not the profoundest, subtilest philosophy; not even the strongest, most inflexible will. It must be an awful moment, when such an oppressive burthen descends upon the shoulders of any among the sons of men. They however who seek their strength from the living Source of all strength, shall find strength. Feeble as we may be in ourselves, the Apostle, who gloried in his infirmities, declares that in Christ we can do all things; more especially, we may not doubt, all things imposed on us by our duty to Christ and His Church. He who says to His Church in the text, *Ye are the Light of the world*, proclaims in another place, *I am the Light of the world.* This latter declaration explains the former, and enables us to understand its possibility, and is indeed one with it. For there can be but one Light of the world, originally and essentially. If the Church be the Light of the world, it must be by the Light of Christ shining in her and through her; and then even the frailest and meanest earthen vessels may give light. In herself and of herself she has no light. Only through Christ can any man have any spiritual light: only through Him can the Church have any spiritual light. If we turn away from Him, we shall dwell in darkness, and cannot be the light of the world; nor can the Church. This, whenever it comes to pass, is that "disastrous eclipse," which "perplexes nations." O may no such dismal calamity ever fall upon this branch of Christ's Church! May we never turn away from Him, who is the Source of all light! May we always lift up our hearts and souls to Him, who sits on His eternal throne pouring light and strength and joy and peace on all such as believe in Him!

Then shall we be enabled by Him to fulfill our glorious calling; and then will our Church be indeed the Light of the world, shining not by any light of the sun or of the moon, but with the glory of God lightening her, and the Lamb for her light.

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH:

A SERMON PREACHT

AT ST PETER'S CHURCH, BRIGHTON,

ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10th, 1840,

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE CHICHESTER DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.

TO THE VENERABLE

HENRY EDWARD MANNING,

ARCHDEACON OF CHICHESTER.

My dear Friend,

In dedicating this Sermon to you, I am not influenced solely by the desire of giving utterance to my esteem and affection, and of connecting my name with yours, as it has pleased God in His lovingkindness to associate us, by ordaining that we should be the two eyes of the spiritual Father of this Diocese. Both the occasion when this Sermon was preacht, and the subject treated in it, almost constrain me to inscribe it with your name.

For to you, far more than to any other man, — after him who was its founder, and the instrument of this as well as of so many other blessings to this Diocese, — does our Association owe its original establishment, and whatever prosperity it may since have enjoyed. Your wisdom, under God, has been our chief guide; your eloquence has stirred our hearts; your loving spirit has checkt and healed the first outbreaks of anything like division. And since he, whom we both loved and revered as a father, was called to his reward, before our Annual Meeting was hallowed, as he had purpost that it should

be, for the first time with a religious service, the little offering, which would otherwise have belonged to him, falls by a sort of inheritance to you.

Moreover the very subject seems to mark it as rightfully yours. Unity, the Unity of the Church, is of all things the dearest to your heart, at least only subordinate to, or rather coordinate with Truth, without which, you well know, all Unity must be fallacious. And as that which fills the heart will overflow from the lips, you yourself, several times since this Sermon was preacht, have poured out your earnest thoughts and desires for the Unity of the Church. Your sermon at the next Anniversary of our Association was devoted in great part to setting forth the spiritual principle of Unity, how it is by putting on the Mind of Christ that we shall best seek Unity and ensue it, and how our dissensions and divisions arise from our want of that mind, and from our sins against it. Since then you have made the Unity of the Church the subject of an elaborate Treatise, in which, as in all your writings, the spirit of love speaks, but in the argumentative part of which, I grieve to say, there is much I am unable to go along with. A Dedication however would be a place ill-suited for discussing the differences between us: indeed to do so effectually might require a volume scarcely inferior in bulk to your own; and the following Sermon may suggest certain points at which we diverge. In your first Charge, on the other hand, where you also speak of Unity, there are half a dozen sentences on which I would crave your permission to offer a few remarks. For they give a brief, summary expression to an opinion which is very prevalent in these days, but which I cannot hold to be other than erroneous, and which,

whenever it has been allowed to display itself in action, has been hurtful to all true living Unity.

In the latter part of that Charge, having spoken of the manner in which the Annual Meetings of the Clergy at Visitations may serve to produce uniformity in our practice, you proceed thus: "I am prepared to hear it said that uniformity without unity is a hollow and lifeless thing. This is granted as soon as said. But will not a thoughtful, much more a philosophical mind detect something trivial and unmeaning in this rhetorical way of opposing unity and uniformity, as if they were two ideas, almost two repugnant things, instead of the outward and inward, the visible and invisible form of one and the same reality? But even though they were things separable, uniformity even without unity is at least better than discrepancy added to disunion. If we were indeed so shorn of the spirit of grace as to lack inward unity among ourselves, still there is no reason why we should inflict the visible tokens of our disunion upon the flocks committed to our charge. But after all, is it not certain that uniformity is the silent and symbolical language of unity? Is there any law in God's works, which has not its own invariable form? What is the variety of nature but the uniform expression of a variety of laws, not a various expression of any one law? Do not laws of relation, and proportion, and symmetrical figure pervade all the works of God with a severe and unerring uniformity? It is absolutely certain that, wheresoever there is unity in the idea, there will also be uniformity in the expression; and in all things which have life the converse is also true. Dissolution of parts will break up the uniformity of organized bodies; but it is only after the

life is fled. It will linger a while in testimony of what it was, and then dissolve into multitude and variety. But there is no such thing as unity of life without a uniformity of structure and a harmony of operations: and in all moral action uniformity of practice is not only a symbol but a means to unity of will."

Now in the first place I would beg you to consider, why is it "trivial and unmeaning" to speak of unity and uniformity as two totally distinct and separate ideas, seeing that people are so prone to confound them, and that such evils have resulted from the confusion. Of course, if the opposition be merely "rhetorical," it may then be trivial and unmeaning. But even if uniformity were the only outward expression in which unity can manifest itself, still it is not necessarily trivial and unmeaning to urge men to meditate on the distinction between the form and the spirit; since our idolatrous fancy and understanding are so apt to mix and mistake them, and to cleave in all things mainly, if not solely, to that which is outward. Hence those persons in all ages, who have lifted up their voices against the superstitious observance of the letter which killeth, and have called men to the reasonable worship of the lifegiving spirit, are rightly honoured among the benefactors of mankind. Nay, did not our Divine Master Himself reprove those who were scrupulous in tithing mint and anise and cummin, while they neglected judgement and mercy and faith? those who made clean the outside of the cup and platter, but within were full of ravening and wickedness? At the same time I readily allow that the antiformalists also often run into excess, forgetting that, though the empty cup is sorry refreshment, the wine without the cup would

be spilt abroad,—forgetting that, in this our state of imperfect selfcontroll, forms and ordinances imposed from without are wholesome and necessary, and that it is a higher act of freedom to submit to them, than to reject them. They are too apt to fall short,—who indeed does not?—of that heavenly Wisdom, which taught, *These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the others undone.*

But further, I would contend that uniformity, in the sense which in these days is usually attacht to that word, is by no means necessarily or essentially the form in which unity manifests itself; that, on the contrary, the injudicious pursuit and enforcement of uniformity have oftentimes marred unity, and must do so, from engaging in an endless struggle to efface and destroy that diversity and variety, which God has ordained shall prevail in every part of the creation. This desire of imposing uniformity is one of the commonest errours of our weak, self-relying, narrowhearted, stiffminded nature. For it is not a desire of raising ourselves and our brethren up to some ideal standard: he who could frame such a conception, would likewise discern that the only way of approximating to its accomplishment is by animating men with the same principles, and stirring them to realize those principles, as best they may, according to the gifts they have received. Nor will the seeker after uniformity be studious to conform his own conduct to that of his neighbours: such an attempt would indeed imply an amiable humility; but it would be impracticable, since, while shaping ourselves after the model of one, we should be receding from thousands; and it would often involve a sacrifice of honest convictions. They however who want the whole world to walk in one way, are sure to

mean at bottom that this way shall be their own way. The one exemplary unit, to which men have wisht that all others should conform, has always been more or less that which occupies the largest space in our intellectual field of vision, and with the notions and feelings, the habits and circumstances of which we are the most familiar. Indeed, inasmuch as it is a point of duty to take care that what we do shall be that which our deliberate judgement deems best and fittest, a slight logical oversight will infer that the selfsame course must be best and fittest for others; although differences of position, of relations, of education, of character, of moral and intellectual habits, give rise to endless varieties in that which is obligatory and expedient.

Delusions of this kind have been a perpetual source of misconceptions, misjudgement, contemptuous and hostile feelings, and even of overt enmity, in every region in which man has had to act; but they have been far the most hurtful in the Church; because in questions pertaining to religion we too readily identify our will with God's will, and thus, instead of being checkt by that deference for others which practical life breeds, grow to fancy ourselves bound to carry our will into effect; and because all constraint from without is injurious to that, which can have no true worth, except as the free and reasonable service of the heart and mind. In the very first ages of the Church obstinate attempts were made to enforce rites and ordinances, which were outward, typical, unessential, and therefore finite, mutable, and transitory. Nay, the purpose of the Apostolic Council at Jerusalem, which in this as in other respects differed so widely from other Councils, was to put an end to dissension by sanctioning

diversity of practice; and though two positive regulations were enacted, as expedient under the circumstances of the Church at Jerusalem, it was soon felt that these regulations also were merely local and temporary; wherefore the Church, in a wise exercise of her liberty, thought right to remit them. St Paul too had to struggle over and over against one form or other of this delusion; and hence it is in his writings that we best learn what are the true principles of unity, and how to discriminate them from those rules of uniformity, which men are ever setting up in their stead. The former, it has often been recognized, are proclaimed for all ages of the Church in those sublime verses of the Epistle to the Ephesians, which are the text of this Sermon: and those verses are followed by an enumeration of the different gifts and offices bestowed on the various members of Christ's body, which are to *work effectually* in union, so that *the whole body shall be joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth.* Again, what a lesson full of heavenly wisdom does he give to the Church in the fourteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans! a lesson which the Church has grievously disregarded, and against which she has frequently sinned; nay, which has been shamefully evaded by persons bearing rule in the Church, under the plea that it related merely to those early ages, when Christians were living in the midst of a heathen world; as if the principles urged through that whole chapter were not of permanent obligation; as if its precepts were anything else than a setting forth of that gentleness and forbearance and love, which ought to guide the disciples of Christ in all their dealings with each other, so that no one may destroy or hurt any of those *for whom Christ died.* Or

shall we rather open the first Epistle to the Corinthians, in order to learn how there are *diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit*, and *differences of administrations, but the same Lord*, and *diversities of operations, but the same God working all in all?* and how it is the will of God that *the body should not be one member, but many*, each performing its part in ministering to the body and to every other member of it? and how a far higher wisdom is manifested in the union of all these diverse members into one body, than *if the body were all one member?* I know not what words could prove more convincingly than this whole passage, that uniformity is not the essential form of unity, but that unity, according to the riches and fulness which God has been pleased to shew forth in His world, manifests itself best in diversity.

Here I cannot help asking you whether there is not something slightly "rhetorical" in your own antithesis, that "uniformity even without unity is at least better than discrepancy added to disunion." For, since the persons who fall under your reproof, draw a broad distinction between unity and uniformity, so as even to "oppose" them to each other, it seems plain they cannot be advocating "discrepancy added to disunion," but must rather be maintaining the very truth urged by St Paul, that unity manifests itself in diversity. And as they set the two ideas of unity and uniformity in opposition, they must probably contend, — with much truth, though, it may be, with some exaggeration, — that, according to the laws of nature, of man's moral nature, as well as that of the outward world, a real living mighty unity cannot manifest itself otherwise than in diversity. This proposition would seem indeed to be directly opposed

to yours, that "uniformity is the silent and symbolical language of unity;" and still more to that implied in the question which follows: "What is the variety of nature but the uniform expression of a variety of laws, not a various expression of any one law?" But as the word *uniformity*, like every other abstract term which gets into general circulation, has become somewhat ambiguous, it is possible that some part of the apparent contradiction may rise out of this ambiguity. In our popular speech, I conceive, *uniformity* means identity in outward form or act, more especially when used with reference to the Church and its services, being generally associated with the Act of Uniformity, by which that identity was enjoined; and we use the term equally, whether the outward identity result from an identity of inward principles, or be imposed compulsorily by some external power. This however is very different from Hooker's meaning, when he says (E. P. iii. 1. 3.), "The Unity of the Church of Christ consisteth in that Uniformity which all several persons thereunto belonging have, by reason of that one Lord whose servants they all profess themselves, that one Faith which they all acknowledge, that one Baptism wherewith they are all initiated." For this uniformity of the members of Christ means their being actuated by the same formative principles, and is perfectly compatible, as Hooker contends throughout his great work, with wide diversities of civil, moral, and religious acts. Hence that which is said in behalf of uniformity in Hooker's sense of the word, is no argument in favour of that very different uniformity which has been imposed on us by the Acts of our Legislature. Both may be good; but as logicians, in arguing for the latter, we must beware of using

arguments which apply solely to the former. Yet the chief part of your arguments, so far as I can understand them, seem to relate rather to the mode of operation, than to the result produced thereby. Therefore, when you say that "the variety of nature is the uniform expression of a variety of laws," the opponent of uniformity might rejoin, *This is all I wish: let the infinite variety of human thoughts and feelings and characters find their uniform appropriate utterance in this same manner, each after its kind.* But the result of such a process, however harmonious it might be, whatever unity there might be in it, would have nothing of the uniformity which he condemns.

Still I must confess myself perplext by the assertion, which, though not directly enunciated, is implied in your interrogation, that "the variety of nature is the uniform expression of a variety of laws, not a various expression of any one law." Surely the aim of Philosophy and Science is, and has ever been more or less consciously, to trace up those secondary laws of nature, which they discern in their immediate operation to their one aboriginal source: they have rightly felt a conviction that this source must be one; and though they have often overreacht themselves in the pursuit, they have made great progress therein. According to the doctrines both of Philosophy and Science, as it seems to me, the variety of nature is the varied expression of a few simple laws, diversified by the character and combination of the elements subjected to their operation. As in speech, by a few simple laws, out of a few vocal elements variously combined, we produce an almost endless variety of words, so does Nature, out of a few elements, by a few simple laws, produce an endless variety of forms

and appearances. You maintain indeed that "it is absolutely certain that, wheresoever there is unity in the idea, there will also be uniformity in the expression." If however by *uniformity* you here mean sameness, I would remind you of the common remark that no two leaves on an oak are exactly alike. In the lower orders of the creation a considerable uniformity is found, in earths, in crystals; but the higher we mount, the more it gives place to diversity. The same distinction too prevails between the different classes of the same order: firs for instance are more monotonous than deciduous trees. Moreover in all classes those species, which are affected by cultivation, acquire a greater number of varieties, to which there hardly seems to be a limit; the recent improvements in horticulture having shewn that in the seeds of the commonest flower an almost indefinite variability is latent, which cultivation may develope. A like law is discoverable in mankind: as man stands above the rest of the creation, there are far greater diversities of character in him, even in his rudest state, than in any other creature; in proportion as his intellectual and moral faculties are educed by cultivation, the varieties of individual character become more markt; and as you yourself have well said, in your Sermon *on the Mind of Christ*, when characters become perfected by putting on that mind, "they stand out with an individuality as definite and perfect as the stars of heaven."

So again in the works of the human intellect, in proportion as it is more genial, more vigorous, more refined, there will be a greater variety; while here also, when genius is extinct, when imagination is feeble, the understanding comes forward with its rules of uniformity.

You are not old enough to remember the contest against the unities, as they were misnamed, and the other uniformities, which exercised such sway in literature during the last century, and which had just been driven to their last hold at the time when I began to take interest in such questions. The illustration however may be of use: for here also it was maintained that uniformity is indispensable to unity; and the French tragic writers, belonging to a nation which has a singular faculty of degrading ideas into abstractions, deemed that in writing tragedies they must adopt the outward formal rules, which peculiar circumstances, connected with the origin of the Greek drama, imposed upon the tragedians of Athens. But Lessing, and other critics since, have shewn that this very seeking after uniformity was most inimical to unity,—that, if the great Greek poets had lived in modern Europe, the form of their compositions would have been very different, — and that there is far more real unity between the tragedies of Shakspeare and the Greek, notwithstanding the glaring dissimilarity in their outward form. Here I may remark that, as Christianity has enabled man to gain a much clearer sight of the Unity which pervades all things, Shakspeare's wonderful genius, living under the influences of Christian thought, has fused elements into unity, which the Greeks would have deemed discordant. Yet the unity in him is of a deeper and higher kind. So is the unity of Christian painting deeper and higher than that of Greek sculpture; and the unity of Christian harmony than that of Greek melody; even as the unity in the varied song of the nightingale is far more perfect than in the monotonous cry of the cuckoo; which, in spite of its uniformity, can

never blend into unity. ' Or, to take another familiar example, there is nothing in which the dreary dulness of the last century manifests itself more than in its town-architecture, which has but one remarkable characteristic, its uniformity. This they sought; and this they attained. You may walk for miles in London, hedged in between two similar and parallel lines of straight, high, dingy brick walls, unbroken except by regular rows of oblong holes. Yet these streets never give a conception of unity comparable to that awakened by Venice and Nuremberg and the old parts of Antwerp and Bruges. On the other hand, few intelligent persons will doubt which town in England does produce the grandest impression of unity, with the rich variety of its buildings, speaking of so many centuries, but harmonized by the unity of their moral and spiritual purpose, and bearing witness that generation after generation rejoiced in consecrating their choicest gifts to bring up the youth of England in the pursuit of truth and in the knowledge of God. Nay, what is that most perfect pattern of Unity, which God has vouchsafed to establish upon earth for the comfort and blessing of mankind, and which is declared to be a type of the Unity between the Church and her Lord? It is not the union between man and man. In order that the unity may be more entire, the diversity must be greater: that which is lacking to the one, must be supplied by the other. And even among marriages those may be deemed the most perfect, not where there is the fullest uniformity and similarity, but the most harmonious contrast of characters, where each is the complement, so to say, to the other, each being according to its kind. A masculine character in the wife, an effeminate one in the

husband, may increase uniformity, but will hardly improve unity. Wordsworth, when speaking of the causes of the pleasure derived from metre, is led into a like train of illustrations. "Among the chief of these causes," he says, "is to be reckoned a principle which must be well known to those who have made any of the arts the object of accurate reflexion; I mean the pleasure which the mind derives from the perception of similitude in dissimilitude. This principle is the great spring of the activity of our minds, and their chief feeder. From this principle the direction of the sexual appetite, and all the passions connected with it, take their origin: it is the life of our ordinary conversation; and upon the accuracy with which similitude in dissimilitude, and dissimilitude in similitude are perceived, depend our taste and our moral feelings."

I have only been repeating again and again what St Paul says about the unity of the body. If a body were to be made up of arms, or of legs, or of heads, or of any one member whatsoever, how inferior would it be in unity to the human form divine! and how greatly is the unity of that form raised above that of quadrupeds by the distinction between the arms and the legs! Yet, simple as these truths are, and plainly as they are involved in that passage of St Paul, they are entirely lost sight of by those who hunger and thirst after uniformity. You yourself too, if you had borne them in mind, would hardly have written so strongly in favour of it. Nor is that which is true of individual life less true of corporate life; though in this instance also it is a truth that few statesmen are duly convinced of. For practical men, when they are not content with being mere practical men, but are ambitious of reasoning about their office, will generally measure all things

by the last of their understanding, the faculty which practical life developes the most; while it rather stunts the imagination, which might have helpt them to conceive the manifold benefits accruing from diversities of circumstances, of customs and manners, of ancestral institutions and feelings. Hence it comes that our political reformers are so busy in squaring and leveling all things according to some favorite rule: their axiom is much the same as yours, that the unity of the nation is to manifest itself in the uniformity of all its parts. This was the axiom of the jacobinical republicans; and this was the axiom of the jacobinical emperor. Few men in those days, and not many in these, could appreciate the truth, which Niebuhr, from his living insight into all history, discerned with such clearness, that it became one of the dominant principles of his thoughts, — the truth which he has exprest repeatedly, and which lies at the bottom of a large part of his political reflexions,—that, "as in organic beings the most perfect life is that which animates the greatest variety of members, so among states that is the most perfect, in which a number of institutions originally distinct, being organized each after its kind into centres of national life, form a complex whole." With this truth we Englishmen ought to be familiar; since our own constitution a few years back was, and perhaps still is, the noblest exemplification of it: yet many of the recent innovations in our legislation shew that we have no adequate conception of its importance. Rather are we infected with the desire of centralizing and uniforming everything. We are so intoxicated with the love of machinery, that we think mechanical action better than moral, as being surer and more punctual in its operation.

And so indeed it is immediately: but we forget that one of the noblest features in the English character has arisen in great measure from that diversity of local institutions, which have awakened a higher feeling of personal responsibility than is to be found in other nations. To the meditative minds of Germany on the other hand, such thoughts have become matter of ordinary contemplation. Thus, when looking the other day over the last edition of Nitzsches *System of Christian Doctrine*, a book which is quite a digest of profound thought and learning, and one of the most precious works of recent German theology, I came to the following sentence in a newly added note, occasioned by Rothe's Treatise on the Church: "Every one will acknowledge without hesitation, that the highest unity, the most perfect universality, is that which comprehends, combines, and reconciles the utmost fulness of diversities." He then complains that Rothe, while he assigns all the riches of variety to the Christian State, makes the Church "a present of the shadowy grandeur, but real poverty, of uniformity:" which doubtless is among the reasons why Rothe's book has found so much acceptance in England, not indeed for his political, but for his ecclesiastical views.

Nitzsch further asks, "How is the idea of unity and universality best realized, by the voyage of the Romish Liturgy to Siam and Pekin, or by the working together of the evangelical missions in all quarters of the world?" This question reminds me of that dismal substitution of uniformity for unity, under which the heart and mind of man groaned and pined, when the Papacy, incapacitated by its very position, and the assumptions involved therein, for recognizing any other than a formal

unity, imposed a Liturgy in a dead language on all Christian congregations, of every nation and region beneath its sway, issuing its despotical edict to arrest the miracle of Pentecost, and ordaining, so far as lay in its power, that men should not hear and speak of the wonderful works of God in their own tongues, being unable to appreciate the heavenly glory of that unity, when the great multitude, *of all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues*, shall stand before the throne of the Lamb. It is a painful symptom, that such an abuse should find admirers among the members of our Church in these days. They plead that it is an advantage for foreiners, when they go into a church in any country, to hear the same words with which they have been familiar from their childhood. So too forsooth many a foreiner has thought it very inconvenient that he could not hear his own language spoken at inns, in the marketplace, by the peasants when he is roaming about the country, in society when he wishes to mix in it; and he has seldom thought of asking himself whether, of the two, it would not be more reasonable that Mahomet should go to the mountain. Thus, for the sake of a few casual vagrants, the natives of every country are to be under the soul-deadening bondage of hearing words in an unknown language, and of repeating the same by rote, at the very time when the depths of their being ought to be stirred. They are to be debarred from the blessing of having their own homely words, the words which sprang up within them along with their thoughts and feelings, sanctified by being made the means of pouring forth their hearts before God. Is it not written, *Let the children first be filled?* And who can estimate the grandeur, the depth, the expansive power, which our language and the German have derived

from the national liturgical offices, as well as from the national translation of the Scriptures? What a difference is there between the very word, *word*, and *mot!* how far purer, less sensual, more spiritual are *love* and *liebe* than *amour* and *amore!* which is doubtless owing mainly to the scriptural use of those words. To a feeble imagination indeed, especially when its wings have been clipt that it may not fly beyond the purlieus of self, it will seem a grand and imposing thought, that all the nations of the earth should be uttering the selfsame words to God. But is there nothing grand and elevating in the thought, that all nations are lifting up their voices to Him, each using its own words, the words which gush from the depths of its heart, and which are fresh with the dew of its feelings? Is there nothing grand in the thought, that "Earth with her thousand voices praises God?" Verily shoals of men, if they spoke their mind, would declare that Thomas Burnet's smooth flat paradisiacal earth, as smooth and flat as the sea-sand, would be far more beautiful than the present confused jumble of mountain and valley and rock and cliff and glen. And certainly the sea-sand has the advantage on the side of uniformity; yet, unless one bring in other objects to limit it, one cannot raise it up into the idea of unity: so essential to unity is diversity. Or again what visible object can kindle the idea of unity with anything like the same power as the sight of the nightly sky, with its hosts of stars and constellations showered over it in every variety of form? Yet doubtless the uniformalist would deplore that they are not ranged in regular courses, in rows or concentric circles, like the spangles on his drawingroom ceiling. He would say, *Yes, the sky would be very beautiful, if I might but comb out its tresses, and put its jewels in order.*

I have written to you freely, discursively, in the tone of a private letter, rather than of an argumentative discussion. For I had it on my heart to speak on this matter of uniformity, which is again much talkt of now, as is natural when an age takes a bent toward the externals of religious worship: it often comes before us in the discharge of our official duties: and unless much caution be exercised by those who are in authority, it seems likely to aggravate the divisions in the Church. Hence this passage in your Charge has been quoted and praised oftener, I believe, than any other, a fate which not seldom befalls the worst passage in a book. For if a wise man says anything which countenances and seems to give a reason for a popular errour, the holders of that errour are glad to shelter themselves under the sanction of his authority, and of whatever show of argument he may bring forward in their behalf. And though you yourself, while you advocate uniformity, are animated with a true and fervent love of unity, and would never seek uniformity by any measure calculated to impair unity, yet in the generality of cases I seem to have observed, that the most clamorous and pertinacious sticklers for uniformity are those into whose hearts the desire of unity has hardly gained an entrance, and whose religion vents itself for the most part in outward observances. Indeed how could it well be otherwise? They who have seen the blessed vision of Unity, with the prayer of the Saviour breathing through it as the spirit of its life, and the smile of the Father beaming upon it, how can they turn from this, to dote upon anything so shadowy, so harsh, so empty as mere Uniformity? or how can they care much about Uniformity, except so far as it is indeed

the expression of a living love for Unity, submitting its own heart and mind to do as others do for the sake of a more entire union and communion?

At the same time, seeing that one can scarcely combat any errour, without being suspected of intending to become the champion of its opposite, I must remark, that, while impugning the notion that uniformity is indispensable to unity, I have not meant to say a single word in behalf of irregularity and licentiousness. It was indeed very sad a year ago to see your pious and learned friend Dr Pusey urging differences of ritual practice as arguments against a measure designed to prepare the way, under God's blessing, for a closer communion between our Church and that of Prussia; for it has been constantly held by the highest authorities, that, in things ceremonial, great diversities may warrantably prevail between different Churches, and that these diversities should be no hindrance to communion between them. Within the pale of each national Church on the other hand it is expedient and desirable, for the sake of order and discipline, that there should be a considerable similarity of practice; and a national Liturgy is such an inestimable benefit in many ways, that, to secure it, we should readily sacrifice whatever might be gained by a more definite expression of personal and occasional feelings. What I deprecate is the endeavour to establish uniformity for its own sake, as if uniformity in itself were a thing to be sought and admired. So far as uniformity is expedient, it is expedient from our weakness and frailty, by reason of which we cannot be left to the free utterance of our own hearts and minds; and because the submission to certain general rules and restraints is a condition of social union:

moreover in divers parts of our work our power is much strengthened by our pulling together. This truth is urged with his usual judgement by him, who alone ought to have been termed the Chancellor of Human Nature, as well as the Chancellor of Nature,—whereas the former title has been given to a man far less deserving of it,—in his excellent little treatise *On the Pacification of the Church*, which, along with the other *On Church Controversies*, might be profitably studied by all parties in these days; being rich in practical wisdom suited to all ages, but of a kind which has seldom been duly heeded, and often grossly sinned against. I will quote the closing paragraph of the part which speaks concerning ceremonies, as the remarks, even in their literal sense, are unfortunately not wholly inapplicable to our own time. "For the cap and surplice, since they be things in their nature indifferent, and yet by some held superstitious, and that the question is between science and conscience, it seemeth to fall within the compass of the Apostle's rule, *that the stronger do descend and yield to the weaker.* It will be materially said, that the rule holdeth between private man and private man, but not between the conscience of a private man and the order of a Church. But yet, since the question at this time is of a toleration, not by connivence, which may encourage disobedience, but by law, which may give a liberty, it is good again to be advised whether it fall not within the equity of the former rule; the rather because the silencing of ministers by this occasion is, in this scarcity of good preachers, a punishment that lighteth upon the people, as well as upon the party. And for the subscription, it seemeth to me in the nature of a confession, and

therefore more proper to bind in the unity of faith, and to be urged rather for articles of doctrine, than for rites and ceremonies and points of outward government. For howsoever politic considerations and reasons of state may require uniformity, yet Christian and divine grounds look chiefly upon unity." Which last sentence, among other things, may convince you that the antithesis between uniformity and unity is not altogether trivial and unmeaning. At least Bacon was so impresst with the need of enforcing the distinction, that in his Essay *On Unity in Religion* he again says, "They be two things, unity and uniformity," that is, two distinct things, which must not be confounded.

Yet, even where unity of spirit, and reverent obedience to the authority of the Church, and regard to the objects of social union, will produce uniformity of action, it is of no slight importance that we should well understand why we seek that uniformity, and why it is desirable. For in all action, if we are to do right consistently, we should act intelligently, knowing what is the ground of our acting, what is to be its end, and what its measure. Thus, if it be the duty of individual Christians to submit to the authority of the Church, for the sake of edification, both their own and that of their brethren, it becomes a correlative duty in those who legislate for the Church, and who exercise authority over it, not to press on its inferior members, not to burthen their consciences with that which is unnecessary, to deal tenderly with them, as loving parents deal with their children, yea, as the Lord Himself dealt with His disciples. They should keep in mind that excellent axiom, which Bacon quotes, and which sums up the argument of the foregoing pages,

"*Differentiae rituum commendant unitatem doctrinae*, the diversities of ceremonies do set forth the unity of doctrine." On the other hand, if it be supposed that uniformity is to be pursued for its own sake, as a thing desirable in itself, as the only outward form of unity, without which unity cannot exist, then it will be pursued at all costs, at all risks, in all things, small as well as great; and the end is, as has been seen so often in the history of the Church, of the English Church more especially, that Unity is blindly and recklessly sacrificed before the cold, empty idol Uniformity.

You indeed assert that there is a higher and weightier reason, which makes uniformity a main auxiliary in the development of the Christian life; for that "in all moral action uniformity of practice is not only a symbol but a means to unity of will." Alas, my friend! uniformity a means to unity! Is this the lesson we learn from the history of the English Church? Is this the effect which has been produced by our own Acts of Uniformity? those strange, anomalous Acts, which in their imperious character are almost peculiar to our Church, and which resulted from her singular position, when she found herself in a manner identified with the government of the State, and enabled to wield the authority of the State in girding herself round with penal enactments. Was it not the Act of Uniformity under Queen Elizabeth, that first gave birth to the Nonconformists, as a distinct, powerful, and formidable body within the pale of our Church, gathering all those varieties of feeling and opinion, which could not reconcile themselves to its requisitions, into one mass, and setting the Conformists and the Nonconformists in definite array against

each other? Many pleas may indeed be urged in excuse of the statesmen and churchmen by whom that Act was framed. The very existence of the government seemed bound up with the unity and vigour of the Reformed Church. The fallacy of that delusion, which holds unity to be inseparable from uniformity, had not then been so thoroughly exposed, as it has since been, by the teaching of philosophy, and the still more cogent lessons of history. The sanctity of man's individual conscience had never been rightly appreciated by the secular wisdom of Rome; which then, as ever since, sought mainly for outward submission, and which practically sanctioned, if it did not encourage, the notion, that men might justifiably profess many things by their words and their acts, to which they found nothing answerable, and much repugnant, in their hearts and minds. For this is one of the miserable curses attacht to those who worship the idol Uniformity, that, as their aim is bent upon the form, rather than the power, of Unity, they grow to care little about the substance, provided they can get the shadow; and thus they become little scrupulous about truth, in others, and ultimately in themselves also. Nor had men learnt as yet to estimate the consequences of that epochal act in the history of the world, when by God's gracious ordinance the leaders of the Reformation put the Bible into the hands of their countrymen in their own tongue. They saw not what a mighty step this was toward the completion of the work begun on the first day of Pentecost, how a voice was now issuing over the earth proclaiming to each individual man, that he had a reason and a conscience, and that the Eternal God had vouchsafed to make known His mysterious counsels even to him, so that he was no

longer to receive certain portions of the word of life doled out to him by others, but was to read the whole himself, to study it, to meditate upon it, to speak of it to his family, and among his friends. Few saw either the blessedness of the power which was thus imparted to mankind, or the dangers to which, like all power, when abused, it might be perverted. In such a state of things it is not to be wondered at that the sagacious statesmen and churchmen who had the most influence in the Queen's councils at the outset of her reign, or that the Queen herself,—while they were rightly persuaded that the national religion ought to be one, not only in spirit and doctrine, but to a certain extent in form also,—should have drawn their cords somewhat too tight with regard to the latter. Indeed, though more latitude might have been left open on certain subjects, which were matter of contention, the engagement that her ministers shall make use of her appointed Liturgy seems to be no more than every Church is fully entitled to demand. Moreover, bound as the Queen was to feel, and to shew that she felt, herself to be the soverein of her whole people, it became her duty, as well as her policy, not to offend that large body in the nation who still held to the authority of Rome, by departing more than was necessary from the ancient ritual and discipline. Nor does there appear to have been reason at the time for apprehending that the Act would find much opposition in any other direction. Still, although this Act would seem thus far to be nearly unobjectionable,—I am not speaking of its penalties, or of its provision for compelling attendance at church,—we may learn from its effects what a perilous career they enter upon, who deem

themselves called to enforce uniformity as a means to unity. It is one of the saddest spectacles in the history of the world, a spectacle at which angels may have wept, to see the unity of our Church shaken, her peace broken up for a whole century,—to see faithful, holy, zealous men, holding the same faith, acknowledging the same Lord, baptized by the same Spirit, earnestly desiring to serve and approach the same Eternal Father, divided for generations, and even stirred into fierce hostility against each other, by differences about a vestment or a posture. These were not indeed the sole grounds of disagreement; but these, and such as these, were the chief grounds of contention: and had these been removed, as they easily might have been, if a few more points had been left to the discretion of the minister, according to plans brought forward several times in the course of this and the following century, the breaches on matters of greater importance would have been healed, with God's blessing, by a spirit which manifested such a desire for unity, and which would have been strengthened by the might of our Lord's prayer that His disciples might partake in the perfect Unity of the Godhead. You will say perhaps,—at least other persons less mild and considerate have said, and still say,—that the men who scrupled about such things ought to have yielded their scruples to the authority of the Church. Most true, my friend! they ought, and the best of them probably would have done so, if they could have lookt at the matter with the philosophic calmness, which at the interval of two or three centuries costs so little effort. But these men were full of the recollections of the darkness and bondage out of which they had been delivered; the fears of its recurrence were not idle

fancies; they felt they had a warfare to wage; and whatever seemed identified with the errours, by which the blessed truth and power of the Gospel had so long been obscured, was an abomination in their eyes. Even without these extraordinary circumstances, if we reflect on the almost irresistible power which inveterate associations of one sort or other exercise over every child of man, we shall not deem ourselves warranted in blaming our neighbours, because on certain points their associations are not so pliant as our own. These are the very cases, of which St Paul speaks: *One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike.* What then? Does the Apostle, as any man would nowadays, pronounce one of these to be wrong, and the other right? does he bid them submit their opinions to the authority of the Church, and charge the Church to settle the difference, in order that uniformity may be upheld? What a divine sanction do his words give to the sacred liberty of conscience! *Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.* Besides, the duty of those who are under authority, to obey their rulers, involves a correlative duty on the part of those who exercise authority, not to exact obedience further than is needful for the safety and well-being of the community. Indeed all governments have had a feeling of this truth; and this is one reason why laws are mainly negative, repressing that which is evil and noxious, and leaving it to powers which speak more home to the heart and conscience, to enjoin what ought to be done. Above all should this maxim regulate the conduct of such as exercise an authority derived from Him, who would not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax.

Thus it is in the history of the English Church from 1560 to 1662, that we are to trace the effects of the first grand experiment to employ uniformity as a means to unity. I call it the first, because, though Procrustes is renowned as an ardent uncompromising lover of uniformity, it is not recorded that he aimed at fostering unity thereby: and that which was wholesome in the Spartan constitution, and other like institutions, was not the uniformity, which was deadening, but the severe physical and moral training: nor was the purpose to promote unity, in which it would have signally failed, but strength, by subjecting the whole nation to the strict discipline of an army. For thus far uniformity is indeed beneficial, and almost indispensable, so far as men are to be dealt with as machines, whether in a manufactory, or on a field of battle. But the framers of our first Act of Uniformity did desire and propose to themselves to unite the whole nation, so far as they could,—at least all that part of it which had embraced the doctrines of the Reformation,—in one religion under the supremacy of the Queen. Nor had they cause to anticipate the strong opposition which they were about to excite; whereby personally they stand exculpated. This however only shews the more convincingly how the attempt to enforce uniformity will of itself provoke division, calling out differences, which would else have subsisted amicably side by side, into definite, contentious opposition. Several of our wiser prelates indeed, when they discovered the unforeseen result, did what they could by their mildness and forbearance to allay the disputes: but their success at best could not be more than partial, so long as the Act itself continued a permanent symbol of separation. Nor was the Act allowed to slumber: it

led to prosecutions, to penalties: and ever and anon an utterance of royal will commanded that the nation must be uniform, and must be united; as when Queen Elizabeth wrote to Archbishop Parker, that she was "certainly determined to have all such diversities, varieties, and novelties, amongst them of the clergy and her people, as bred nothing but contention, offense, and breach of common charity, and were also against the laws, good usages, and ordinances of her realm, reformed and represt, and brought to one manner of uniformity through her whole realm and dominion;" or as when James the First at the Hampton Court Conference silenced his opponent by the clenching argument, "I will have one doctrine and one discipline, one religion in substance and in ceremony; and therefore I charge you never to speak more to that point,—how far you are bound to obey,—when the Church hath ordained it." The Queen must have known how hard it was to keep her frill, however stiffly starcht, smooth and in order for a single day; the King had ample experience of the impossibility of curbing his own words and thoughts in regard to the merest trifles; and yet they audaciously fancied they could drill every subject in their dominions into putting the same uniform on his heart and mind. Thus indulgence failed to heal the dissensions, because the ground of them could not be taken away: severity on the other hand widened and embittered them. At such a crisis two courses lie open. The chief causes of difference might have been removed: this was the course recommended by the wisdom of Bacon, and accorded with the spirit which animated the wisest and best men of the age, from Grindal down to Usher. But the σχολαστικὸς, from whom we learnt so many sapient lessons in our boyhood,

when he had been promoted to be a schoolmaster, was heard to say, *I have been flogging my boys assiduously every day the last year; yet they have not learnt anything: I must flog them twice a day next year.* This happy unconsciousness that there is any other element in teaching, beside the use of the rod, may have been peculiar to our old companion: but the process of reasoning, that, when a certain degree of severity has aggravated an evil, the severity must be redoubled to remove it, is common among all classes of men, nor least so among those who meddle in statecraft; notwithstanding the lesson taught them by the history of Rehoboam, who lost the ten tribes by this very policy, a lesson confirmed by manifold subsequent experience. Such notions were very prevalent, when God was pleased to hasten the judgement on our Church by placing Archbishop Laud at the head of it. This prelate is the favorite hero and saint of the worshipers of uniformity; and not without a good claim to their admiration. It was said of old, that *love fulfilleth the law;* but his doctrine was, that if you make people keep the letter of the law, they will gain love. There is something marvellous in the pertinacity with which he ever clings to the conviction, that, if the outside of the platter be cleansed, all will be right. When he was chosen Chancellor of your University, his great anxiety, evinced by reiterated earnest remonstrances, is about *formalities*, that is to say, the academical dress: he complains that *formalities*, "which are in a sort the outward and visible face of the University, are in a manner utterly decayed," and says, "If this go on, the University will lose ground every day both at home and abroad;" he charges the Heads to take care that the members of the University should "fit themselves with

formalities fitting their degrees, that the University may have credit by looking like itself; *and then I doubt not but it will be itself too. For it will not endure but to be as it seems.*" These last words, which sum up the creed of the uniformalists, are a curious mark of the outwardliness and superficiality of Laud's mind, — in his heart there was better stuff; —which same character is betrayed by the whole tenour of his most meagre Diary, by the dreary triviality and dearth of imagination in his dreams, and by many sad testimonies in his conduct as a ruler of the Church. For how else can we conceive that an honest, conscientious man, appointed to discharge the office of a bishop in the Church of God, should never, as it would seem, have been disturbed by the thought, that it behoved him to dwell in his Diocese, stirring up the hearts of its clergy and other members by doctrine, by exhortation, by pastoral advice, strengthening the feeble, encouraging the irresolute, cheering the timid and desponding, and guiding those who needed counsel? that, though he was Bishop of St David's for four years and a half, he only visited his Diocese twice during that period, for about two months each time, at a quadriennial Visitation? that, though he was Bishop of Bath and Wells for near two years, he never set foot in his Diocese? And what was he doing all the while? Doubtless, having tried to put the *formalities* right by his Articles at his Visitation, he trusted that everything would go right, and so thought he might employ himself in more important business as a hanger-on at Whitehall and Buckingham House. Alas, my friend, that such a man should have been selected by our modern uniformalists and ecclesiolaters, as the pattern of a churchman and a saint! a man who, when he had carried his point of

making Bishop Juxon Lord High Treasurer, wrote down in his Journal, "*And now, if the Church will not hold up themselves under God, I can do no more.*" I hardly know what words could have betrayed a grosser, shallower ignorance of what the Church is, and wherein her power lies; as though this were the true mode of promoting the increase of that Kingdom, which has been declared to be not of this world; as though one word of faith, one deed of love, one silent prayer were not far mightier to strengthen the Church, than all the Lord-Treasurerships of all the treasures that Mammon has ever piled up in any quarter of the globe. When such a man,—I speak not of his conduct at his trial and death; that was truly heroic and saintly; but, though his end would otherwise lead us to overlook the faults of his previous life, it must not do so when that life itself is held up as a pattern for our age to learn the art of governing the Church;—when such a man was bent to establish his views of uniformity, as the means of regenerating the Church, it cannot surprise a person, who knows anything of the strong and fervid spirits he had to contend with, that, instead of raising the condition of the Church, he overthrew it, falling himself first, with a fortitude and meekness worthy of a high place in the army of martyrs.

The Church was overthrown; and her fall was hastened, to say the least, by the stubborn policy of her Primate; as it was mainly occasioned from the first by her narrow-minded love of uniformity. As one proof how the very attempt to compress men's minds makes them fly asunder in all directions, I will cite a few words from Sanderson's Visitation Sermon in 1641: "I cannot dissemble my fear that it is but too true, by the proportion of

what we almost daily heár or see, that, within little more than this one twelvemonth last past, there have been more false and superstitious doctrines vented in the pulpits and presses of England, than have been, in so open and daring a manner, in the whole space of almost four-score years before, I mean since the first of Queen Elizabeth of blessed memory." This was the immediate effect of the futile attempt to repress such opinions by force. In order that the firy spirits thus kindled should burn themselves out, the Monarchy and the Church of England were swept away, and a free licence and scope were granted to all manner of opinions by Cromwell. Hereby men were taught "to feel the weight of too much liberty," and to long for what they had lost, for the ancient Government, for the Liturgy, for the Church. At the same time the King's Declaration of October 1660, one of the wisest state-papers ever issued, laid down principles, which, if they had been acted upon in a candid, conscientious, peace-loving spirit, would have done much for the pacification of our Church, and would have raised it to a power and dignity and efficiency far beyond what it ever has, or seems ever likely to attain. A strange voice past through England, a voice which spake of unity; but it was soon stifled by the tumultuous cries of opposite parties clamouring in rivalry for uniformity. And ere long all hope was blasted by that second, most disastrous, most tyrannical and schismatical Act of Uniformity; the authors of which, it is plain, were not seeking unity, but division. With evident design its provisions were made so stringent, the declaration required by it was worded with such exactive precision, that it was scarcely possible for an honest Presbyterian to make it: here and there one, whose habits of

thought and temper had preserved him from strong opinions, might: but for the great body no alternative remained, except to belie their conscience, or to cut themselves off from the national Church: and one can hardly doubt that this must have been the express purpose of the framers of the Act. The excuses which may be urged for the first Act, have no place here: and though it is often pleaded in palliation of political parties, that their measures have been taken under the exasperation of suffering and the intoxication of victory, this would be a sorry apology for the conduct of an ecclesiastical government. No question could now be entertained about the prevalence and permanence of the scruples, which it was resolved to set at nought: they had been handed down for three generations, and had become more and more widely diffused, not among the rabble, but among men of exemplary holiness and zeal. Yet, with a full knowledge of all this, it was required that every minister, not only such as might be ordained thenceforward, but all who at that time had any benefice or promotion, should solemnly declare their "unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything contained and prescribed in and by the Book of Common Prayer." This was enjoined, it is stated, "to the end that uniformity in the public worship of God (which is so much desired) might be speedily effected." The previous canonical declaration, that the Prayerbook "contains nothing contrary to the word of God," was hardly more than was implied in the engagement to make use of the Prayerbook in public worship. But this strait waistcoat for men's consciences could scarcely have been devised except by persons themselves of seared consciences and hard hearts, by persons ready to gulp down

any oath, without scruple about more or less. Verily, when I think of that calamitous and unprincipled Act,—of the men by whom it was enacted, Charles the Second, and the Aristocracy and Gentry of his reign,—of the holy men against whom it was enacted,—it seems almost like a prologue to the profligacy and infidelity which followed closely upon it. But what were its direct effects with regard to the Unity of the Church? It bore the name of Uniformity on its forehead: can there have been any who persuaded themselves that a Uniformity so enforced could be a means to Unity? The only Unity that could have ensued from it would have been that of a dead level: and full of woe as have been the consequences of this Act in its failure, they would have been still more terrible had it succeeded. Therefore even we, who love and revere our national Church above every earthly institution, may bless God that it did not succeed. We may bless God, for that He has given such grace and power to weak, frail, human hearts, that meek and humble men, when strengthened by His Spirit, are not to be driven out of the path in which their conscience commands them to walk, by the leagued forces of King and Parliament and Convocation, by the severest penal enactments, or even by the bitter pang of having to leave their loved flocks. Yes, my friend, we may join in giving God thanks for the work He has wrought in such men,—for they are the true salt of the earth,—even though we may deem that there was much of errour in their judgements and opinions, almost as much as in our own. Yet how grievous was the wound to the Church at the time! how grievous is it still at this day in its enduring effects! Two thousand ministers, comprising the chief part, it seems scarcely

questionable, of the most faithful and zealous in the land, were silenced in one day, were severed in one day from their flocks, were cast in one day out of our Church, for the sake of maintaining Uniformity. On that our English Bartholomew's day, the eye wandered over England, and in every fifth parish saw the people scattered abroad as sheep that had no shepherd. From that day do we date the origin of that constituted dissent and schism, which is the peculiar opprobrium and calamity of our Church, by which in almost every parish we find ourselves grievously crippled in our efforts to build up our people into a holy temple acceptable to the Lord; and which in this very year, by its frantic uprore, is rendering it impossible for our Legislature to take any efficient step toward the moral and religious education of the people, although the disclosure of the frightful condition of large masses of our population seemed for a moment to have allayed the contentions of political parties. So terribly is the sin of our forefathers, who framed the Act of Uniformity, visited upon England at this day; nor can any human foresight discern either how or when these evils are likely to terminate. Moreover, after that we had thus cast out so much faith and zeal and holiness, after that,—to use an expression which has been applied less appropriately to a later event of far minor importance,— we had in this manner almost cast out the doctrine of Christ crucified from the pale of our Church, we had to travel through a century of coldness and dreariness and barrenness, of Arminianism and Pelagianism, of Arianism and latent Socinianism,— all which were found compatible with outward uniformity, —before the spirit, which was then driven away, returned with anything like the same power. And the unhappy

descendants of those who were then cast out, they too have suffered wofully for the sins of their forefathers, who in the time of their prosperity had been no less blindly zealous in sacrificing faith and hope and love to the same all-beguiling idol, Uniformity. They have suffered in being severed from the unity of the Church and of the nation: they have suffered in that narrowmindedness, those prejudices and jealousies, which are the heirloom of all sectaries: above all, they have suffered in losing the most precious part of that sacred deposit of faith, which our Lord gave to be the riches and life of His Church unto the end of the world.

Such are the lessons taught by the history of our Church concerning the efficacy of Uniformity, when enforced as a means to Unity. Nor, it seems to me, would a thoughtful, much more a philosophical mind look for any other. For unity is spiritual, pertains to the spiritual part of man, his heart, his mind, his will. Even in lower things a unity formed by aggregation, or agglomeration, or colligation, is merely factitious, like the unity of a sandheap, or of a fagot. If branches are to form a unity, they must be organized into it by a central vital principle. In children we too often see how deadening an education of formalities is; and hence does it come to pass that such a swarm of persons walk about the world, whose moral being has been stunted and almost crusht in their childhood. To such unhappy victims of uniformity, the imposition of uniformity will be tolerable, and may even seem desirable; as is wittily signified by the fabulist, when he makes the fox who has lost his tail so urgent in pressing his brethren to pass an Act of self-mutilating Uniformity. But in proportion as a man's intellectual and moral and spiritual being have

been cultivated jointly, in the same proportion, as I have already observed, with reference to a like remark of your own, will the true genuine individuality of his character be called forth: and though the best men will ever be ready to become all things to all, for the sake of saving some, they who are accustomed to walk in the light of principle must needs feel a repugnance to that which is merely formal, especially when particular forms are associated with inveterate corruptions and abuses. Are all such men to be debarred at once from the ministry of the Church, because they entertain conscientious scruples on certain points acknowledged to be indifferent? The Act of Uniformity says, *Yes:* the spirit of true Catholic Christianity says, *No.* The Church that does so exclude them, maims herself by forfeiting the services of numbers who would have served her faithfully: many of these, feeling an inward call to the ministry, which they cannot follow within the pale of the Church, join the ranks of schism: and while the Act of Uniformity thus casts out many of the best fish from the net, all the bad, all the careless, all the unscrupulous, all the unprincipled may abide in it unmolested. The age which enacted this rigid ecclesiastical uniformity, was addicted, as might be imagined, to the practice of uniformalizing all things. It tried to uniformalize men's heads by dressing them out in fullbottomed wigs. It tried to uniformalize trees by cutting them into regular shapes. It could not bear the free growth and luxuriance of nature. Yet even trees, if they have any life, disregard the Act of Uniformity, and branch forth according to their kinds, so that the shears have constant work to clip their excrescences; and none submit quietly except the dead.

What then is to be the symbol of the unity of a national

Church? On this head I feel sure of having your cordial concurrence; and to you, as to me, it cannot but be a satisfaction, that on this head we have the authority of that great teacher, whom we both admire and honour, and to whom we both thankfully acknowledge the deepest intellectual obligations. Coleridge, in his Notes on Baxter's Life of himself, which are rich in valuable remarks on ecclesiastical matters, speaks of a Liturgy as the only means whereby the unity of doctrine and worship requisite in a national Church can be effectually and beneficially secured. A Liturgy does this, because it is not an outward bond,—so far as it is turned into such, its beneficial operation is frustrated,—but because it addresses itself immediately to the heart and mind in the moments of their highest exaltation, and awakens and bears aloft the slumbering spirit,—because by means of it we are knit together into one body in the presence of God, joining in pouring forth the same prayers, one with another and one for another, the same confession of sin, the same supplications for mercy and grace, the same thanksgivings and hymns of praise. But how, it may be askt, can a Liturgy be upheld, unless there be uniformity in its observance? That it may subsist for centuries and be a great blessing to a nation, with something far short of absolute uniformity, is sufficiently proved by the history of our own Church since the Reformation: for in spite of Acts of Parliament, which aimed at moral impossibilities, it is notorious that diversities of practice in sundry respects have prevailed. In essentials indeed, in all that pertains to the foundations of the Christian faith, a difference may involve a severance from the body of the Church, or at all events rightfully exclude a man from the office of

teaching therein. But it is well known that, on the principal points of doctrine, the original Nonconformists, and the bulk of those who have been called the Orthodox Dissenters, have readily assented to the tenets of our Articles, and to the spirit of the chief part of our Liturgy. The differences and controversies have almost all been on secondary points, and for the main part with regard to matters acknowledged to be indifferent. Yet, as the conferences on these questions were conducted on the general assumption that uniformity was indispensable, they were utterly useless. The dominant party brought forward what they deemed, and what commonly were, sufficient arguments to justify the establisht practice; and then they thought they had done all they were called upon to do. Few things are sadder than the records of those conferences. They display learning, ingenuity, logical and sophistical dexterity, but hardly a gleam of Christian spirit, of that gentleness, meekness, forbearance, or of that desire for peace and unity, which ought to have presided at them. Hence the remonstrants were dismist unconvinced, and rather confirmed than shaken in their opposition. Whereas, if the right order had not been inverted, —if the parties in the conference had set before their minds that their aim should be to cherish unity, instead of enforcing uniformity,—if they had rightly understood that the blessing of a Liturgy is not, that it makes the whole congregation repeat the same words, and go through the same postures and gestures, but that it touches their hearts with the same live coal from the altar, and unites them in the consciousness of the same need, the same weakness, the same frailty, in the same cry for mercy and help, in the assurance of the same gracious deliverance,

and in the same songs of thankfulness and praise,—surely it would have been recognized that the primary ought not to be sacrificed to the secondary, the essential to the indifferent; it would have been felt that whatever tended to disturb and mar this heavenly unity ought to be done away. The question would no longer have been, can we find a sufficient authority in antiquity, or in the reason of things, to justify this practice? but, is this practice of such paramount importance, so intimately bound up with the life of Christian truth, that we must rather cast our brethren out of the Church, than allow them to remain in the Church, if they will not conform to it? Had there been anything like such a hearty desire to remove the stumblingblocks, the chief part of them would have been removed. I do not mean that the Nonconformists ought to have been allowed to remodel the Prayerbook at will, or to expunge or alter any parts of it that were dear to the rest of the Church. But how easy would it have been to have introduced a few more double forms, leaving it to the discretion of the minister to choose which he preferred! In fact this very course, which otherwise would doubtless be branded as a device of modern liberalism, is pointed out explicitly in the King's admirable Declaration above referred to. Some may fancy that such diversities of practice between neighbouring parishes would have led to disputes; and you yourself seem to favour such a notion when you say that, "if we lack inward unity among ourselves, still there is no reason why we should inflict the visible tokens of our disunion upon the flocks committed to our charge." For my own part however, I am persuaded that, were it not for the meddling cravers after uniformity, our flocks would pay little heed to such

diversities of practice, at least if we are careful to feed them with that which is more substantial. You probably remember Jeremy Taylor's excellent remarks on a kindred subject at the beginning of his *Liberty of Prophesying;* still you will not forbid my quoting words so full of mild wisdom, written in a spirit so congenial to your own. "We see that in many things, and those of great concernment, men allow to themselves and to each other a liberty of disagreeing, and no hurt neither. If diversity of opinions were of itself the cause of mischiefs, it would be so ever; but that we see it is not. For there are disputes in Christendom concerning matters of greater concernment than most of those opinions that distinguish sects and make factions; and yet, because men are permitted to differ in those great matters, such evils are not consequent to such differences, as are to the uncharitable managing of smaller and more inconsiderable questions. It is of greater consequence to believe right in the question of the validity or invalidity of a deathbed repentance, than to believe aright in the question of purgatory; and the consequences of the doctrine of predetermination are of deeper and more material consideration, than the products of the belief of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of private masses: and yet these great concernments, where a liberty of prophesying in these questions hath been permitted, have made no distinct communion, no sects of Christians; and the others have; and so have these too in those places where they have peremptorily been determined on either side. Since then, if men are quiet and charitable in some disagreeings, that then and there the inconvenience ceases; if they were so in all others, where lawfully they might,—and they may in most,—Christendom should be no longer rent in pieces,

but would be redintegrated in a new Pentecost." These words apply with still greater force to such matters as are merely ceremonial; with regard to which, disputes so readily flare up, because the grounds of them strike upon the senses and cannot be overlookt, and because all manner of persons are hence easily led to take part in them. And surely we might learn this lesson at least from the discrepancies in the Gospels, that differences of the letter are immaterial when the spirit is one. Even in the two records of the Lord's Prayer, brief as it is, there are diversities: for the Spirit of God is more careful to guide the thoughts of the heart, than the words of the lips.

I know, they who desire to act in the manner here recommended, are sure to be met with those stupid and mischievous saws, that one concession brings on another, and that, when you have once begun to give way and to change, you can never tell where you will be able to stop. Harmless as these sayings may seem in their utter fatuity, it is difficult to estimate the mass of injury they have done to mankind. By means of them pride and indolence and obstinacy have bolstered themselves up in their favorite system of inertness, gaining the too ready concurrence of the timid and feebleminded good. Nor have these sayings, when listened to, ever failed to justify themselves. For they withhold men from conceding, until the concession is extorted from them: and then it is yielded grudgingly, reluctantly; it does not come as an act of grace, and thus carries no grace to the receivers; who, irritated by long contention, and having learnt their own strength from the constraint they have exercised over their adversaries, have been prepared to crave for more, and

emboldened to insist upon it. Surely a wise man will say, *If a concession ought to be made, let me make it forthwith, and thus gain that only real strength which arises from being in the right. Then, should a concession which ought not to be made, be demanded of me, the very strength accruing to me from this act will better enable me to refuse it.* O that people could be brought to believe that right is always might, and that wrong is always weakness!

In the remarks which I have allowed myself to make on the Acts of Uniformity, you may perhaps think I have been proceeding on a misconception of your meaning; for that you never intended to express, nor do your words imply, any approval of a compulsory uniformity, as a means to unity, but merely of such a uniformity as shall result from the voluntary sacrifice of individual prejudices and predilections, out of deference to authority, and from the desire of peace and concord. I know it, my friend: the kindness of your heart would shrink from penalties to enforce uniformity, while your conviction of the spiritual character of Christian truth would discern that such measures are repugnant to the Gospel, and no less inefficient for producing their designed effect, than the chains of the demoniac among the tombs were to restore him to his right mind. Still the Acts of Uniformity, as appears on the face of them, with all their disastrous effects, were founded in great measure on the very opinion which you have been maintaining, that uniformity is indispensable to unity, and a means to it. And though it is a happy privilege of the meek and pious, that errours of human opinion, however firmly held by them intellectually, will be counteracted and neutralized by the higher wisdom of the heart, yet in

ordinary minds such errours beget restless wishes to realize false ideals; and when a man of arbitrary temper, like Laud, is invested with authority, they enable him, if they fall in with the bent of his mind, to work much mischief. Hence it seems to me that no slight service would be rendered to the Church, if any one could help toward setting men's minds right on the relation between unity and uniformity, and toward exploding the noxious errour that uniformity is indispensable to unity. For though the abovementioned illustrations of the mischiefs which this errour has caused, are taken from bygone ages of our Church, the occasion for the warning which they hold out is not gone by. At this day far too many persons are harassing themselves and their neighbours through their anxiety to establish a strict uniformity: too many are magnifying rites and ceremonies, vestments and postures, as if these were the essentials of Christian worship, and as if the peace of the Church might be compromised for the sake of attaining to uniformity in such things. At this day how few understand and recognize the great truth enunciated in the words quoted above, that *differentiae rituum commendant unitatem doctrinae!* Yes, my friend, let us seek unity with all our heart and soul, but not by the way of uniformity, which will never lead to it, but will waste our time by throwing up trippingstones at every other step. Let us rather seek it by those spiritual means which our Lord gave to His Church, by doing what in us lies to draw our brethren more and more to the one Faith in the one Lord through the one Spirit, whereby alone can any be brought to the one God and Father of all. Let us seek it, as our beloved father, Bishop Otter, sought it, by endeavouring

to inspire others with the same love which filled his own breast. The blessings which sprang from his brief episcopate may convince us, if we needed a fresh proof, that this is the true way to seek unity, the more excellent way, which has too commonly been abandoned for the barren, unprofitable way of uniformity.

From him, our beloved father, as I bid you farewell, my thoughts turn to another dear Friend, who has in like manner been taken from us to his reward. He too had the true principle of unity in his heart, the love of God, manifesting itself in overflowing love to man. God has taken him from us to a world where all his yearnings after love and unity will be satisfied; but to us, to this Diocese, the loss is a heavy one; few could be so heavy. At our public Meetings, at which, in this divided and distracted state of our Church, discordant opinions and feelings will sometimes find utterance, it was ever his wont to call us away from these points of contention, and to pour a reconciling spirit over the whole; wherefore, whenever I had anything to do with the arrangement of such Meetings, I endeavoured to manage that our departed friend should close the discussion. For his Christian sincerity and earnestness and love, and his entire freedom from party-spirit, his ready recognition of every spark of divine grace, under whatever form it might shew itself, were known and appreciated by all; and every asperity of feeling was straightway dispelled, as soon as Robert Anderson began to speak. By the following Sermon I am especially reminded of him in more ways than one: for he, in his usual affectionate manner, proposed at our Anniversary Meeting that I should be requested to print it; and since then, with that

gentle playfulness which so well became him, he has several times rallied me for my long delay. Moreover, when I came down from the pulpit, he was the first person who spoke to me; and as his heart was ever longing after that blessed Communion whereby the faithful become one with each other in their Lord, he exclaimed, with reference to the wish I had exprest, "*O why are we not going now to kneel before that table, and partake one with another of the blessed Body and Blood of the Saviour?*" Such recollections become precious, when they belong to one, who, we may feel a confident trust, has entered into the perfect Communion of the Saints in the presence of the Lord.

To Bishop Shuttleworth we owe it that the next Anniversary of our Association was no longer destitute of its crowning blessing: and I trust that every fresh Anniversary will in like manner renew and strengthen the holy bond of brotherhood among the Clergy and Laity of the Diocese. In this wish and prayer, you, my dear Friend, I know, will join from the bottom of your soul. And now let me crave your forgiveness for this long, and, I fear, wholly unprecedented Dedication; in which, you will probably say, with one of your placid smiles, I have been quite acting up to my principles, and shewing a grand disdain for everything like uniformity. When I began, I thought a few pages would hold all I had to say; but the deep interest of the subject has led me on: and how many things still remain unsaid, which, it seems to me, might serve to elucidate and establish the propositions I have been attempting to maintain! I have exprest many differences from the opinions you have given utterance to in your Charge; yet I believe the real

difference between us is far less than it would seem. At all events I trust in God that, so long as we are permitted to live and work together, we shall also be permitted to shew practically, that unity may exist without uniformity, and that the diversities of opinion and feeling, which on many subjects prevail between us, shall in no wise impair the unity of affection by which we are bound to each other, or our unity of action in the service which we owe to the Church and her Lord. If I may without presumption apply words, which were spoken of wiser and holier men, may the surviver of us be enabled to say, as Archbishop Bramhall said of himself and Usher, who in like manner differed from him on sundry points of opinion and feeling: "I praise God that we were like the candles in the Levitical temple, looking one toward another, and both toward the stem. We had no contention among us, but who should hate contention most, and pursue the peace of the Church with swiftest paces."

Your affectionate friend,

J. C. Hare.

Whitmonday, 1843.

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

Ephesians iv. 4, 5, 6.

There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

THE desire of unity is inherent in man. It pervades all the expressions, all the modifications of his being, and may in a manner be termed an elementary principle of his nature. It lies, very often without his being conscious of it, at the bottom of all the workings of his mind, which is ever seeking, in one way or other, to infuse unity into the objects of its contemplation, to bring them under one head, to arrange them under one law, to find out some analogy, some relation, some likeness and harmony amongst them. Hence it manifests itself more or less in the whole structure of language, in the speech of the rudest tribes, as well as of the most refined. For the whole of language, even among the rudest tribes, is made up of general terms; that is, of words which do not merely stand for one single act or object, but are common to several, and which always imply certain processes whereby the mind has exerted its unifying power in classing a number under one head. Every one who has watcht the development of the minds of children, must have noticed how rapid and powerful this unifying spirit is in them,

how eagerly they exercise their childish royalty in bringing things together in new associations and combinations. On the other hand the faculty of detecting differences is less vivid in them. As that does not spring from an inward principle, but is rather forced upon the mind by the observation of outward objects, it requires the training and discipline of experience, and thus belongs to the wisdom of practical life, beyond which few are allowed to soar. Nevertheless in this, as in so many other respects, the highest wisdom returns to that, which had been the instinctive utterance of childhood; and while the efforts of all Science are to discover and demonstrate the unity of the laws of nature, the might of Poetry is displayed in investing all things with a unity of feeling, and Philosophy is ever yearning and seeking after the one allpervading principle of the universe.

That this desire of beholding unity in all things arises from that unity of consciousness, in which man was made, and in which his Maker mirrored His own unity, cannot well be doubted. But while we have this principle of unity within us, we are set in the midst of a world, in which everything, when we first look out over it, seems to jar and war against all unity, a world which at first sight may seem to be just emerging or subsiding out of Chaos. The character of the outward world, as it presents itself to our senses, is not unity, but multitude. It rushes upon us wave after wave, with a confused noise of many waters, entering into our minds by every inlet, taking possession of us, and almost overwhelming us. Its name is Legion. We try to bind it; but it bursts our chains. We strive with all the craft of our understanding, we send out the whole host of our faculties, to reduce it to unity:

for a while it seems to submit; we flatter ourselves that our object is effected: when anon we perceive that a thread in our network has slipt, whereby the whole unravels, and all the treasures, which we deemed secured in it, are scattered abroad.

The principle, I said, which leads and compells us to seek for unity in all the objects of our contemplation, notwithstanding the diversity and multiplicity and contrariety wherewith they assail us, is the unity of our consciousness, in which our Divine Maker mirrored the unity of His own being. Accordingly it is only so far as we retain this true unity in ourselves, that we can succeed in discovering a living unity without us. That there must be an essential unity pervading all God's works, is implied indeed in the very fact of their being His works. Even in man's works, in the works of the same man, there is a unity, whereby they reveal the mind they spring from; though, as in all men there is more or less of disorder and distraction, the harmony in all has been marred and is incomplete. In a far higher degree then must there be a unity running through all the works of Him who is essentially and entirely and indivisibly and eternally One. But this true unity we cannot make out, unless we gain sight of its principle, unless we have hold of the only clue with the aid of which we can explore the multitudinous chambers in the endless labyrinth of the universe, — unless we can trace back the countless streams of life to their one primary source in the Wisdom and Goodness of their Author. Cut off from this source, they seem unconnected, vagrant, often opposite. Hence there are two main causes, through the combined operation of which we are apt to miss unity; and no man has ever

lived, over whom these two causes have not both of them continually exercised more or less sway. Both of them are the results of that separation from God, of that depravation of the Divine Idea in man, which took place at the Fall; unless it would be more correct to say that they are both parts of that very act through which man fell.

The first of these two causes lies in that departure and estrangement from God, whereby man has set up his own will in the place of God's will, his own wisdom in place of God's wisdom, and has sought in his own understanding for the key to the mysteries of the universe, instead of endeavouring to ascertain the mind of God by a patient and diligent examination of the various manifestations wherein that mind is revealed. Thus man quitted the true centre of truth, and took his stand at a false centre, even his own individual self, and so, looking from that false centre, saw everything distorted, disproportioned, out of place, and in confusion. This proneness to take a false centre,—to set up ourselves as the centre of all things, round which all things are to revolve, to which all things are to be subordinate, and for the sake of which all things were made,—is so strong in our fallen nature, that in no respect can it be overcome, unless by laborious and long-continued experience and reflexion. The most conspicuous example of this propensity, which the history of human knowledge presents, is the well-known one of the Ptolemaic system of the universe; which, starting from the self-centring notion, that this earth, the habitation of man, must needs be the centre of the heavenly sphere,—a notion universal and almost indelible,—endeavoured with singular ingenuity to account for all the phenomena of

the heavens on this erroneous hypothesis. In this case however the fallacy is one, which the nature of our consciousness and that of our perceptive organs force upon us. It is one common to all mankind, resulting inevitably from their position and constitution; and since it is but slightly connected with the will, or referable to any moral obliquity, no mischief of importance has accrued from it. Indeed the theory founded thereon enabled men to gain divers correct glimpses of the true unity of the world. Of a far worse character are the errours arising, not from a false position common to all mankind, but from that which is peculiar and individual,—the errours mixt up with individual partialities or antipathies, springing from national or local prejudices, from those of a class, of a form of government, of a sect. In all these and sundry other ways, man has ever been apt to make himself the centre of all things, to make the accidents of his own condition the canon of right and wrong, so that whatever agrees with his own circumstances is to be admired and approved of, whatever differs from them is to be reprobated and condemned. Our own form of government, we assume and proclaim, is the only good form of government; our own laws are the only wise laws; our own creed is the only true creed; and whatever differs from it is not only false intellectually, but implies a vicious and degraded state of mind. Nay, even the caprices of our manners, and the very fashions of our dress, we magnify, so as to look with displeasure on everything that does not accord with them. In these feelings and thoughts, as in all that are widely diffused, there is an element of truth; else they could not have gained their currency: in all coin, however mixt with alloy, there is a portion of the

genuine metal. It is right and fitting that we should prize and love and be thankful for the manifold blessings with which the goodness of God has surrounded us in this world. It is right and fitting that we should love our country, our home, the home of our fathers, the laws and institutions under which they and we have grown up, the Church in which God has placed us, with all its rites and ordinances. We should love these blessings thankfully, faithfully, fervently, devotedly, so as to count it an honour and privilege if we are permitted to offer up any sacrifice, even that of our lives, in defending and preserving them. Allowably too may we *take pleasure in the stones* of our country, and *favour the dust* thereof. That which is wrong and blameworthy and injurious, is not our love and admiration for our own country, but our dislike and reprobation of other countries, not that which is positive in our feelings, but that which is negative and exclusive, not our attachment to that which we know, but our contempt for that of which we are ignorant. It is, that our light, after the manner of earthly lights, only sets forth and glorifies itself, and the objects immediately around, throwing the distance into thicker darkness, instead of being diffusive, like heavenly lights, and irradiating all things. Nor is this negative portion of our feelings at all requisite, as some may narrowmindedly suppose, for the support of the positive. Even if we wanted a crutch to lean on, we should not strengthen our footing by using our crutch as a club to strike with. The fact is, this tendency to despise that which we have not, does not proceed from any genuine, deep, reverent love for that which we have: love *envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not easily puffed up.* The spirit I have been speaking of is

much more nearly akin to that vanity and self-importance, which identifies all its circumstances with itself, and hence regards every deviation from those circumstances as a personal affront and offense. If we English are so notorious among the nations of Europe for our insolent bearing toward foreiners, surely we are no less notorious for our political squabbles and animosities, for our religious feuds and antipathies, and for a general spirit of dissatisfaction at home. Whereas, if our love were rightly principled, and referred its objects to their true source, it would likewise observe its due proportions. While we loved God as the Author and Giver of all our blessings, and were especially thankful to Him for all those gifts, which He has poured out so bountifully upon us, and which so far exceed our deserts, we should bear in mind that God has other creatures beside ourselves, whom He likewise loves, and likewise vouchsafes to bless. We should bear in mind that His power of blessing is not stinted, like that of the patriarch, who had only one blessing to give; but that His are manifold, yea, without number and end, infinite as His own infinite Wisdom and Goodness; and that, precious and dear as are those which He bestows upon us, those which He bestows upon others are likewise precious as coming from Him, and dear to the persons to whom He gives them.

This then is one of the main causes of errour, spreading far and wide, through every region of thought and action, —of errour, whereby we entirely miss the harmony and unity of truth, and become involved in endless controversies and contradictions. We have strayed away from the one divine universal centre, and have set up a multitude of arbitrary fictitious centres in its stead; so that each

people has its own centre, each class has its own centre, each party and sect has its own centre, nay, each individual man has his own centre; and that is himself. Hence, inasmuch as we all look out from a different point of view, and yet are persuaded that our point of view is the centre of the universe, we all see all things differently: each people has its own system of truth; each class and party and sect has its own system of truth; each individual man has his own system of truth. This too each will maintain, with pen and sword, or, it may be, with anathemas and *autos da fè*, to be the only true system, and that all others are false and counterfeit. Hereby we all fail of attaining to any right principle of unity. Instead of sailing out, as we might do under the guidance of the heavens, with one consent from all parts of the earth on the same great voyage of discovery after truth, we are broken up and scattered hither and thither, with no other help to steer through the darkness, than the reflexion of our own sternlights in the waters. The very faculties of our minds, which were given to us in divers proportions and combinations, to the end that each might bear its appropriate part in the one great work, being infected with the selfish taint, become propagaters of division, while they contend and jangle with each other for the supremacy. The poet asserts that the imagination is the one ennobling faculty in man, and so loses the substantial ground of reality, and bewilders himself among the clouds. The philosopher worships what he calls reason, and entangles himself in the mazes of formal abstractions. The man of the world can recognize no truth except in the practical understanding dealing with the objects of sense, and thus will run round a ring in

the dreary sandy wilderness of utilitarianism, until at length he sinks down exhausted in some epicurean oasis.

Thus we are come to the second great destroyer of unity and cause of division. The first is our setting up ourselves, our own will, our own fancies, our own notions, as the centre of the universe, instead of the will and mind of God. The second is our having given up our hearts to the creature, instead of the Creator, our having set our affections on earthly things, which are numberless, vague, fleeting, mob-like, and having drawn them away from heavenly things, which roll in imperturbable unison around the eternal throne. When we changed the glory of the incorruptible God into images made like to corruptible man, and to birds and fourfooted beasts and creeping things, then we lost the source, the principle, the very idea of unity: and as our desires attacht themselves to these things, and our lusts laid hold on them, and our covetousness and ambition tried to seize larger and larger masses of them, they became the occasions of perpetual contention and strife; whence every man's hand and every man's heart was set against his neighbour.

Nor is this division and contrariety merely a division and contrariety between man and man: a like division and contrariety and struggle is found in the heart and soul of each man. When we fell away from God, our hearts and souls were crackt and rent in twain by the violence of the fall. Hence, when we look into ourselves, instead of concord and unity, we see the dark chasm of sin cleaving the soul asunder; and whithersoever we look out of ourselves, we see the reflexion of it stretching across both earth and heaven. Sin, the universal solvent,

breaks up the heart and the mind into a multitude of insulated faculties and feelings; and since its first essential act was the rejection of law,—which is the outward bond, as love is the inward principle, of all union,—it can behold nothing but isolation and desolation around it. Nay, in its audacity it even dared to dissolve the unity of the Divine Idea into a multitude of fictitious deities, deeming nothing too base, nothing too foul, nothing too depraved, to be seated on a throne in the heavens. Thus man was lured and dragged so far away from the only true principle of unity, that he plunged into all the extravagances and all the abominations of Polytheism. Or, if some more thoughtful men, meditating on the traces of unity still left in their own minds, became desirous of seeing a counterpart of that unity in the outward world, they forgot what had marred that unity; they forgot that evil of every kind is utterly incompatible with unity, and destructive of it; and so, in shrinking from the fantastical and revolting absurdities of Polytheism, they fell back into the dead blank of Pantheism.

By these two causes, which pervade and taint all the workings of our fallen being, the desire of unity, which is inherent in man according to the idea of his nature, is thwarted and hindered from realizing itself either in thought or in action. When God said, *The Lord thy God is one God*, the true principle of all unity was proclaimed to mankind: but from this unity man had turned away, when he gave himself up to the love and worship of self, and to the love and worship of the creature. There is still indeed a principle of unity in our understanding, the part of our nature which has suffered the least from the Fall; and by this principle, as we have seen already,

its movements, whether consciously or unconsciously, are swayed and regulated: but all manner of principles of division sprout out of our will, and our ill-governed affections and passions. These, if they were allowed to run riot, would tear the world to tatters; and only by a hard, persevering struggle has the principle of unity been able from the beginning to keep these principles of division in check. It has united men into families: it has united families into nations: it has organized nations into a kind of unity under the authority of one ruling head: it has tried to bind the tumultuous wills and passions of the multitude by the chains of law. The history of these struggles with their various vicissitudes forms the history of the world. The only unity however that man could attain to in this way, is the negative, outward, abstract, formal unity of the understanding, which masses its objects together by overlooking or repressing whatever individualizes and would keep them apart,—the unity of unicity and of uniformity (z),—not the unity which discerns the divine central principle in them, and is no way embarrast by the endless variety of its manifestations, but rather rejoices therein, even as we rejoice when we look at the infinite diversity of the constellations in the one starry sky. In families indeed, where the spirit of love has always found the freest play, some approximations have from time to time been made to this higher unity, recognizing the individuality of each several member: but in states almost the only object of governments has been to repress that which would violate unity; and law has ever recognized that its office is purely negative, and that its appropriate voice is *Thou shalt not.* When it has aimed at anything beyond this, when it has attempted by human

means to build a tower the top of which should reach to heaven, and which should be a positive centre of union for mankind, the result has proved that it was passing out of its sphere: the band, which was strained too far, has burst; and, instead of unity, there has issued from the attempt multiplied and widened division.

These two causes of division, by which the Spirit of Evil contrived to mar the divine unity of the universe, so far as man has power to do so,—selfwill and the lust of the creature, — have been busy ever since the Fall at their Satanic work, breeding and fostering division and strife; and they are scarcely less busy or less powerful in these days than in the worst times of old. That the selfish principle is still dismally active, we see by divisions even in that Church, which was meant by God to be the reuniter and harmonizer of the world; we see it by all manner of divisions in the State, by divisions in every parish, and almost in every household. Everywhere we find an exaggerated estimate of each man's peculiar habits and usages and opinions, and a grievous want of deference and forbearance toward others, an utter want of that reverence which every man has a right to claim for such doctrines and feelings as are sacred in the eyes of his conscience. All men are convinced that they are thoroughly right, even in the notions and views which they have taken up the most lightly and unreflectingly; and they have just force of logic to draw the inference, which they deem inevitable, that everybody who differs from them must be wrong. Nor is the solvent, insulating power of that delusion, by which man gave up his heart and soul to the things of this world, less powerful or less efficacious than in former ages. Still too it produces the same

fruits,—on the one side Polytheism, or the idolatrous worship of the creature, and of everything about it that fascinates and intoxicates the senses, only stript of that imaginative halo which in some measure elevated the Polytheism of old,—and on the other side Pantheism, with its fatal denial of moral responsibility, its obliteration of the distinction between right and wrong, and its blind prostration before every phantom of power. More especially has this been manifested in the leveling, anarchal spirit, which has been so overweening in the last and in this generation. For Jacobinism is the form which Pantheism naturally takes in political life, when it is not restrained by those feelings and principles of a higher origin, which its more enlightened advocates practically recognize, even while they speculatively reject them. In the civil state, as in the universe, it is anarchal; and having cast away all moral distinctions, and the only true principles of law and order, it would also destroy all civil distinctions, and everything that bears witness to law and order, and to the permanence of rights, in the constitution of society. Surely every one who hears me must be aware in what terrible forms these aboriginal deadly heresies are still shewing themselves, even in this nineteenth century of the Christian era, even in England, which deems itself the favorite seat of all practical wisdom and moral truth.

Now with regard to both these causes we have seen, that the primary reason why they have hindered man from attaining to unity, is, that, when he gave himself up to their influence, he abandoned the only true Principle of Unity, and fell away from that Centre, whence alone all things can be seen working together and at one. Thus, whithersoever we look abroad over the earth, if we look

only with the eyes of our natural understanding, we behold nothing like unity and concord, but variety, diversity, multiplicity, contrariety, discord. And if we look into ourselves, into our own hearts and minds, at the utmost we see a crowd of reluctant faculties, bound together in some few men by the iron hoops of a stern will, but much oftener scattered about, and running confusedly to and fro. What then are we to do, in order that we may fulfill our inherent desire of unity? whither are we to go, that we may find a true principle of unity? how are the dashing waves of the world to be quelled and husht? how are the clashing elements of human nature to be harmonized and set at one? To these questions there is only one answer; and that is to be found in those words of the Apostle, which I read to you at the beginning of this Sermon: *There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one Hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

As it was in falling away from God that man lost the principle of unity, so it could only be through his being brought back to God, that that principle could be revived within him. He needed to be reconciled to God: he needed to be set at one with God, or atoned. He needed, as we have seen, a twofold atonement: for, as his separation from God had been followed by division within himself, he needed at the same time to be set at one with God, and to be set at one within himself. The manner in which this great work was to be effected, the only way in which it ever was or ever can be effected, is set before us in these words of St Paul. What sublime and wonderful words they are! The Apostle lookt out over the face of the

earth; and what did he see? Nation warring against nation, faction against faction, school against school, man against man, struggling passions, battling interests, plots, snares, fraud, rapacious avarice, insatiable ambition, with the Roman empire waving its sword over the heads of mankind, and awing them into servile torpour, while voluptuousness had relaxt all the traditionary bonds of virtue and moral obligation, so that human nature seemed to be almost crumbling to atoms, or floating like ragged scum on the surface of hell. Even among his own countrymen there were endless dissensions, unceasing feuds. Countless swarms of bodies met the eye; but no spirit breathed life into them: everything like a spirit that had animated the nations in earlier ages, and infused some sort of unity into them, had fled away. And yet the Apostle, casting his glance over the world, seeing what was not to be seen, and feeling an undoubting assurance of that of which no token appeared, dared to say, *There is one Body, and one Spirit.*

For though these words were addrest primarily to the Christian converts at Ephesus, to certify them that they had been called to a participation in this one Body and this one Spirit, it cannot well be questioned that he, to whom, above all the Apostles, was vouchsafed the glorious vision of the reception and indwelling of the nations in the Body of Christ,—he whose especial mission it was to declare that the wall of partition had been taken away, and that there should no longer be Jew or Greek, circumcision or uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, male or female,—that is, that no distinction of nationality, of customs or rites, of civilization, of social condition, or of sex, should in any way obstruct the perfect union and unity of those among whom these distinctions subsisted,—so that,

notwithstanding these distinctions, Christ should be all, and in all, and that through His indwelling they should all be one,—it cannot be questioned that here also the Apostle of the Gentiles was contemplating the reception of all mankind into the one holy Body of Christ. This is the one Body he speaks of: he saw that Christ's Church was to be one Body; and it was to be one Body, because it was to be animated by one Spirit: for thus alone do the material elements of our fleshly bodies become one, through the one living spirit that animates and pervades and organizes them; and when that living spirit has past away, they moulder into dust. But Christ's Church was indeed to be one Body, because it was to be animated by one Spirit, even the Holy Spirit of God, whom the Father sent down from heaven to dwell for ever in the hearts of all such as believe in His Onlybegotten Son. This too is the one hope of our calling, the sanctifying presence of the one Spirit, obtained for us by the merits and intercession of the Eternal Son.

Such, the Apostle saw, was to be the perfect unity of the Church, according to the will of God, who from the beginning purpost to shew forth His own Unity, no less than His own fulness, in the whole created universe. The Church was to be one Body, and one Spirit, one Body animated by the one Spirit of God, according to the one blessed Hope whereunto it had been called, by Him who became Incarnate to this end, that all mankind might gather around His all-atoning Cross (AA). We were to be restored to the Unity, which we had forsaken and forfeited. We were to be brought back to the One Eternal Principle of Unity, who is above all, and through all, and who also purpost to be in us all (AB). This however could not be

done immediately. We had turned away from God; we had hidden ourselves from Him; and when He called to us, we fled and hid ourselves more and more in the deep, sunless, pathless forest of the world; we hid ourselves in the groves of an idolatrous Polytheism. To the Jews indeed God had revealed Himself in His Unity. *Hear, O Israel,* He had declared, *the Lord thy God is one Lord.* He had declared also, what followed of necessity, from this His eternal Unity, that we, His reasonable creatures, being endowed with the faculty of knowing Him, were bound to love our one God *with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our mind.* But this we could not do with the simplicity and integrity of unbroken innocence; we could not do it even with the entireness with which a child gives its heart to its parents. For we had given up our hearts to the things of this world; and the world had fixt its fangs into them; and we could not free them, except by tearing them away; nor could this be done without blood. Hence the Jews could only approach God through the Law, every command of which was designed, as it were, to free men's hearts from the fangs of the world, to loosen one of the nails whereby man was fastened to the cross of this world. Moreover, as man's departure from the one God was caused by his giving up his heart to the things of this world, God ordained that men should bring offerings of the things of this world to Him, both as an acknowledgement that He was the Lord of the whole material world, no less than of mankind, and as a token that they were bound and were willing to make sacrifice of the things of this world, whereby they had been withdrawn from their communion with the one God, in order that they might be received again into that communion. And as every act of obedience to the Law was

a binding and resigning of selfwill, and every offering was a giving up of the things of this world, so these latter sacrifices further shewed that the former in themselves were incomplete, and required a higher purificatory and sanctificatory power to make up for their deficiencies. They declared that man's obedience by itself could never take away sin; and while his reason and conscience pronounced that the higher could never be purified and sanctified by the lower, and accordingly that the blood of bulls and rams could not take away sin, they were a witness to him that he needed a purification and sanctification beyond himself, and carried his thoughts and hopes and desires onward to the fulfilment of that which they typified and foreshewed.

Thus the one God could not be approacht by the Jews, except through the works of the Law, and through typical sacrifices; and therefore He further declared Himself to be a Consuming Fire. For by the works of the Law no man can approach to God: no man could do so then; no man can do so now. If any man fancies he can approach to God by the works of the Law, the Law is still like the flaming sword of the Cherubim, turning every way, and keeping the way of the Tree of Life. The action of law, as law, is outward, and, if it produces any manner of unity, can only effect this forcibly, by destroying what resists it, and fusing things into one mass. Nor can any man really approach to God by means of types and ordinances, or anything symbolical; he could not then,—nor can he now, —unless he has already been brought nigh to God by the Spirit, enabling him to look through that outward veil, which has ever been so apt to arrest his sight, and to prevent his discerning what lies beyond and behind it. And

thus it came to pass here again, that men lost sight of the Divine Principle of Unity in the multiplicity of commands and observances: here again they turned from the worship of the Creator to the idolatry of the creature, from the reverent, self-sacrificing service of the Lawgiver to the disputatious, self-justifying observance of particular ordinances and ceremonies. For there is but one way in which we can really be brought back to the One God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and who dwells in all His servants; and that way is through the one Lord who has reconciled us to God,—through the one Faith in Him, whereby we receive Him into us,—and through the one Baptism, whereby we are purged from those sins which keep us away from Him, and are made partakers of the gift of the one sanctifying indwelling Spirit.

Through Christ, and through Him alone, we have power given to us to approach to the one God and Father of all. He is the fulfilment of the Law, so that the Law shall no longer keep us away from God, entangled in its meshes. He is likewise the fulfilment of the types and rites, so that, after we have beheld His glory, we can no longer be deluded by phantoms and shadows into mistaking them for realities. When He was lifted up on high, He was to draw all men to Him, teaching them by the lesson of His Cross, that they were to draw nigh to God, not by this work or that work, not by the sacrifice of this thing or that thing,—for that all partial obedience and service left them in their state of disunion and separation,—but by the entire sacrifice and resignation of their whole being to the will of God. In Him, the one Lord, the invisible Godhead dwelt visibly upon earth: in Him, the second Adam, the divine image was renewed, to be communicated

to the fallen race sprung from the first Adam. In Him, the one Head, and through Him, the Church becomes one Body, and receives the one Spirit to abide in it.

And how are we to become partakers of the Unity which Christ came to bring back to us? By Faith; by the one Faith, whereby we receive Him into our hearts as our Saviour, as our Mediator, as our Atonement, as the one Incarnate God, through whom our human nature is restored to its communion with the divine; by that Faith, which, according to our Lord's last command, was to precede the baptismal purification and renewal of the believer.

But while we continue under the dominion of sin, and under the condemnation incurred by it, Faith is almost powerless. The moment the eyes of Faith are unsealed, it recognizes its own blindness and feebleness: its first utterance is, *Help my unbelief.* Therefore, in order to vivify our Faith, our one Lord instituted His one Baptism, the Baptism in the name of the one undivided Trinity, wherein by one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body.

Thus, being led by our one Lord, and united to Him by one Faith, and incorporated into His Body by one Baptism, we are enabled to approach to the one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all.

These then, we are authorized to declare, are the essential, indispensable principles of Unity in that Body of Christ, which is ordained to embrace all nations and kindreds and languages. And the Unity thus infused into us is to be maintained by that Communion in the Body of Christ, wherein, as the Bread is one, we, being many, become one Body (AC). Without these there can be no unity. Without

these we cannot be reunited to God; and therefore we cannot have any stable principle of unity, powerful enough to calm and harmonize the discordant elements of our nature, and to sway the course of our lives among the manifold forces that would drive us this way and that. But when we are brought nigh to God in this manner, we are no longer left to the various precepts of the Law, which merely teach us to coast the skirts of the land of Duty. The one principle of Love, which alone fulfills the Law, and which spreads and branches out through our whole being, as the living source of a diviner law, is revealed to us; and under its calm and mighty impulses we may sail across the wide ocean, and circumnavigate the globe.

These are the living principles of unity in the Church, whereby the Church is made one with her Lord: these are the primary pervading principles of that unity; and beside these there are no other such. Other ordinances and institutions may be valuable in a secondary and instrumental manner, for the sake of preserving the unity of the Church unimpaired in the midst of an unfriendly and often hostile world,—with a view to the transmission of the one Faith and the one Baptism in their uncorrupted purity from generation to generation,—or in order to the maintenance of order and discipline. But these primary essential principles of unity are to be kept studiously distinct from whatever is secondary and accidental, however important and valuable as an accident. From all such things the principles enumerated by the Apostle are to be carefully distinguisht,—the one Faith and the one Baptism, whereby we become members of the one Body of our one Lord,

animated by the one Spirit of promise, and thus are brought home and reconciled to the one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in us all.

Nor is this caution superfluous. For as through the whole history of man prior to the birth of Christ we find a universal proneness to substitute the idolatry of the creature for the worship of the Creator,—a proneness betraying its carnal origin by its readiness and zeal in prostrating itself before objects physically the meanest and morally the most corrupt,—in like manner since the birth of Christ, and the setting up of His Church as the antagonist of the world, that Church has in all ages been grievously troubled and disordered by a similar proneness to look at the outward instead of the inward; to set up the secondary on a level with, if not above, the primary, and to cling more tenaciously and passionately to the formal than to the spiritual. This was the case from the very first: the Jews wisht to Judaize the whole Church: so in after times did the Romans wish to Romanize it: much reason therefore have we to beware lest we be infected with a desire of Anglicizing the whole Church, lest we be reluctant to recognize and acknowledge the Church of the Lord, unless her whole stature and gait and garb be exactly the same as we ourselves are familiar with (AD). The contest against this narrow selfish spirit within the Church was a main part of the mission assigned to the great Apostle of the Gentiles: and from him may we best learn to discriminate between those institutions and ordinances which may vary with time and place and national habits and condition, and those principles which are set before us in the text, and without which none can truly be members of the one Body, or animated by the one Spirit.

The time will not allow me to enforce these remarks by the citation of particular instances, in which false conditions of unity have been set up as indispensable in the Church, and which might need some investigation to explain their fallacy, and to trace their mischievous effects. I can do no more than refer to that one instance, which has been the most conspicuous and the most calamitous. And surely you will already have anticipated me in casting your minds back on that period of many centuries, during which the Church of Christ was not content with her one Lord, and her one Faith, and her one Baptism, but, having almost let slip that one Faith in her one invisible Lord, deemed it requisite to have a visible Head, and set up her one Bishop in the same category with her one Lord (AE). Alas, too, we know that this dismal errour is still holding captive a very large part of Christendom, benumbing the spirit, as its natural consequence, with a load of ceremonial and ritual observances, and strengthening the carnal tendency to elevate the outward and visible above the inward and invisible. And though the blessed Reformation was sent by God to redeem the Church from this idolatry, the propensities by which it had been corrupted, were not eradicated thereby, but have shot up from time to time, admonishing us that it is absolutely necessary, so long as we continue in our earthly tabernacle, that we should watch and pray diligently and assiduously against all idolatries, whether of the flesh or of the carnal understanding. So momentous is that lesson, with which the beloved disciple closes his Epistle, a lesson which at first we might incline to think belonged solely to long extinct ages, but which, foreseeing what an ever-sprouting crop of idolatries would in all ages contend with the love of Christ, and try

to supplant it in the hearts of His professing followers, he bequeathed with the emphasis of last words to the Church, *Little children, keep yourselves from idols.* Assuredly too we have great need of this lesson in our days,—no age ever had greater, — although by different classes it is needed in different, and almost opposite directions. For while the world is rioting unrestrainedly in numberless kinds of idolatry,—in the idolatry of the flesh, in the idolatry of Mammon, in the idolatry of machinery, in the idolatry of power, in the idolatry of the gifts of the understanding, and of the works of the understanding, in the idolatry of luxury and ease and comfort, and in every other form of the idolatry of self,—at the same time, in order to counteract these grosser worldly idolatries, which have been sprouting up in these latter years no less rankly than the giants were fabled of old to have sprung out of the first teeming throes of the elements, it has been ordained that we should return, after a long period of indifference and laxity, to a higher appreciation of whatever is valuable and venerable in the institutions and ordinances of the Church. Hence we are again exposed to a danger, which is more formidable to the Church than all the idolatries of the world, because it paralyses the arm wherewith we are to combat and cast down those idolatries,—the danger of cherishing new or antiquated forms of idolatry within our own bosom; the more so, as the very impetus of a rebound is apt to carry people into an opposite excess; while they seem to themselves to be merely discharging a debt, in fondling and exaggerating what has been unduly neglected and depreciated. Thus we are especially likely to revive the old errour of placing other conditions of unity on a par with the apostolic principles, the one Faith and

the one Baptism whereby, through the power of the one Spirit, we are incorporated into the one Body of Christ, and reconciled by Him to the one God and Father of all.

For still the selfish spirit is at work and as busy as ever. The self-glorifying negative spirit, which magnifies all the circumstances of its own condition, and despises and condemns whatever differs from them, is quite as active in this generation, as in the most narrowminded of those that have past away; and in no country does it exercise a greater sway than in England. We are still very apt to believe that God made and redeemed the world for us only, not for us along with the rest of His Church, but merely for us, and for those who agree with us, so far as they do agree with us. Still in the stiffness of our minds we find it hard to conceive how unity can mean anything but unicity; whereas the higher idea of unity is that which is identical with universality or catholicity. The one Church, which is the one Body animated by the one Spirit, is the universal catholic Church, comprising all who are united to Christ by the one Faith in Him, and the one Baptism ordained by Him; even as the One God and Father of all, who is above all, is also through all and in us all. We know how it ever has been, and still is a great stumblingblock to the understanding to recognize the mysterious union of the Trinity in the Unity of the Godhead. The understanding can comprehend one, as a unit standing by itself, but not as unity embracing the fulness of all things; whereas the unity of the Church is a divine unity, the unity of infinite fulness. Therefore St Paul, after the verses in which he speaks of the unity of the Church, and of the principles and conditions of that unity, goes on to declare, that this unity of the Church implies a diversity

of gifts: *But to each one of us is given grace according to the measure in which Christ gives it.* And then, having set forth the great power and glory of Him from whom these manifold gifts come, how they came from Him who had ascended up on high, and led captivity captive, and who thereby shewed that He had previously come from the place whither He reascended, *far above all heavens, that He might fill all things*, St Paul goes on to enumerate some of the gifts which He had given to His Church: *He gave some to be apostles,—and some, prophets,—and some, evangelists,—and some, pastors and teachers,—for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ, until we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to perfect manhood, to the state when Christ shall be fully formed in our hearts* (AF).

In selecting this subject, brethren, as one which would be appropriate for this occasion of our solemn meeting, I was chiefly influenced by the reflexion that the purpose for which this meeting is assembled, the purpose for which our Association was originally establisht, was to realize, and in some measure to fulfill that unity, to which the Church of Christ is called, that unity which, so far as the Church is indeed the Body of Christ, must needs be one of its chief characteristics. The bands of that unity had been sadly relaxt. Slender evidence was to be seen in our Church, during the last century, of the one Body that it ought to have been,—still slenderer of the one Spirit that ought to have animated it. For why? it held but loosely to the one Faith: it had many faiths, if that word would admit of plurality: each man had his own faith, more or less remote from that which unites the Body of Christ to its Head, a faith in many lords, of whom Christ might be

one, and perhaps nominally the chief. Hence men, having lost the one centre of unity and of union, sought to unite around other centres of their own devising. Many asserted that interest was the only true centre of human nature, that it was the living centre of every man's heart, and that a clever conjuror might make it a centre whereby nations also might be held together. Others brought forward some fantastical or fanatical maxim as a principle of union. Instead of clustering round centres of love, people coagulated round centres of hatred. Their watchword was, *Death to all who will not join us.* Of these conspiracies and combinations there were many at the close of the last century; and the same combining spirit is wofully active in this land now. Men combine to carry some scheme of their own, to realize some notion, to enforce some union. They are rightly convinced that strength lies in union; but not knowing the only living principles of union, they fail of attaining to it. So too must all fail, so must the statecraftsmen of our days fail, who deem they can hold men together by the ties of interest. The principles and feelings which united men in days of old, patriotism, loyalty, the love of freedom, were living principles, and had a power over the heart and soul: they gave men a centre out of themselves, and attacht them thereto. Thus they had force to suppress and almost extinguish lesser personal motives, and to make men encounter hardships, submit to sacrifices, exercise selfdenial. But interest has no power to awaken any heroic feeling: it can extract no sacrifices, no selfdenial; or, if it does, they are a mere mockery. Therefore the attempt, which is accounted the consummation of modern wisdom, to render a people obedient to the laws by convincing them that it is their

interest to be so, is like binding the strong man with withes, which anon he starts up and rends asunder. Most thankful indeed should we be that this is so,—that interest has not the power to curb man's will, and to tame his passions,—that his nature, in spite of its corruption, is still too noble to sink quietly into such abject bondage. We should give God thanks that no earthly motive can bind men lastingly together, and that selfishness cannot do otherwise than sever them, from the first in heart and spirit, and sooner or later in act also: for terrible would be the power of evil, if it did not thus contain the germs of its own dissolution. We should give God thanks that it is impossible for men to be cemented in a lasting indissoluble union by any feebler power than the Love which proceeds from Him, and which the One Spirit infuses into the One Body of Christ.

But while men are combining on all sides for worldly, and not seldom for plainly evil and lawless purposes, the Church also has been reminded of her own unity, has been roused out of her languid torpour, has been bracing her limbs anew, and gathering her members together. As her principle is unity, her form ought to be union; and it is only by and through the union of her members that her great ends can be accomplisht, this union itself being one of the first and greatest, as is proved by the earnest desire for it exprest in her Lord's last prayer. Hence in the early ages of the Church, when the One Spirit was poured out with that abundance which was indispensable for the work of establishing her foundations, men were so entirely delivered from their inborn selfishness, that they laid their possessions at the feet of the Apostles, deeming the whole of their substance a slight return for

the priceless blessings which they had received. *And the multitude of them that believed*, the Evangelist tells us, *were of one heart and one soul; neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possest was his own; but they had all things common. And continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.* In this simple account we see what perfect unity the love of Christ ought to produce in His disciples, and how this unity ought to manifest itself, by the removal and giving up of everything whereby men in their natural state are kept asunder. Now it is as an attempt to renew something like this feeling of unity in the One Body of Christ, to revive a faint and distant likeness of this union, that we rejoice and are thankful for the establishment of our Association. It is merely a beginning, a first attempt, a very remote approximation, but still it is an attempt to lead the members of our Church in this Diocese, all her members, lay as well as clerical, to feel that they are indeed members of the One Body of Christ, to lead them to feel that, as such, it behoves them to help and minister to each other, that, as such, they ought not to live to themselves, but to each other and to God. The spirit of Charity, as manifesting itself in noble works to the glory of God, and in a largehearted bounty to the poor, had waxt faint in the land. The spirit of Mammon had become so powerful, and had wrestled so mightily and craftily against it, and had assailed it with such an ever-increasing swarm of luxuries and vanities, that Charity was hardly able to lift up its head. Even the rich, if they gave a few shillings now and then in casual alms, and subscribed their yearly guinea to one or two

beneficent institutions, deemed that they had fulfilled their duty. And are there not many who think so still? are there not many who even fall short of this? Meanwhile few had a notion that it behoved them to relieve any other than the grosser physical wants of their neighbours: moral and spiritual wants were scarcely taken count of by the great majority of those to whose stewardship the riches of England had been committed. And the pious men, who effected so much in the latter part of the last, and at the beginning of this century, for the revival of a higher spiritual life in England, as their views of religion revolved almost entirely about the wants and hopes of the individual soul, and as they found little answerable to their own feelings in the main body of our Church, although they were zealous, as every true Christian must be, to promote charitable works, were thus led by circumstances, as well as by the peculiar character of their religion, to form societies composed of unconnected individuals, who took an interest in the furtherance of godliness, from all parts of the country. But as these societies emanated from persons invested with no ecclesiastical authority, they could not be connected with our ecclesiastical organization: nor could they take advantage of the means afforded by our ecclesiastical system for bringing home the duties of Christian liberality to every member of the English Church. Now this is the end which our Association is designed to accomplish. It addresses itself to the whole body of the Church in this Diocese: it desires to embrace every member of the Church, all who have anything to give for the promotion of God's glory in the well-being of His people, and all who have any spiritual want to be relieved. Its object, according to

the purpose of its pious and benevolent founder, is to remind us that the members of Christ have not merely bodies, but souls also, to be taken care of, souls to be trained from their childhood in the knowledge and love of God, souls to be fed with the bread of life, when they come to maturity. It admonishes us of these wants, and tells us that it is a momentous part of our duty, and that we ought to esteem it a blessed part of our Christian privileges, to contribute of our substance, so that Christ's poor may not perish for lack of those blessings which He came to give them.

Toward the accomplishment of these works something has been done already; a beginning has been made; and therefore we rejoice. But we trust that it is only a beginning; or our joy will be turned into sorrow. We trust that we are to mount from strength to strength; else we shall sink from strength to weakness. Every undertaking has a period of bloom in its spring: the novelty awakens an interest; the energy of the founder imparts itself to those around him. But the novelty passes away, and with it the excitement: the energy, which was merely caught from the reflexion of another's, fades: and unless there is some higher principle to uphold it, the undertaking gradually and not slowly decays. Therefore are we met together in the house of God today, to confess the one Faith, whereby we are united to our Lord, and to seek access through Him to the One God and Father of all. As by the One Baptism we have been incorporated into the One Body of Christ, we are assembled to profess ourselves members of that One Body, and to pray for a more plenteous outpouring of the One Spirit upon ourselves and upon the whole Church, so that we

may indeed be living members of Christ's Body, knit together by love, and ministering to each other in lowliness and joy. We are assembled together after the example of the first Christians, who *continued daily with one accord in the temple:* and would it not be well that we should follow their example still further, by *breaking bread*, so that we might be strengthened for our work of charity by the spiritual nourishment of the Body and Blood of the Saviour? As there is no perfect union without communion, would it not be well that, on this only occasion when the whole Diocese is gathered together in the presence of its spiritual Father, for works of charity, and for the edifying of the Church, we should perfect our feeling of unity by Communion at the Table of the Lord?

Moreover, if we are indeed One Body, if we desire and trust that One Spirit is animating us, if we have set One Hope of our calling before us, what manner of men ought we to be in all our dealings with each other? How ought we to speak of each other? How ought we to think of each other? Brethren, I beseech you, ponder this thought. If we are indeed One Body in Christ, and animated by the One Holy Spirit of God, ought we not likewise to be of one heart and of one soul and of one mind? And yet there are dissensions and divisions amongst us: and yet there are parties in the Church. Contradictory as the words are, there are parties in that Church, which calls itself, and ought to be the One Body of Christ. Consider what it is, when there are divisions in the body, when limb is torn from limb, when a gash is hewn across the trunk. Does not the body perish? So too must it be, after a kind at least, with the Church.

A divided Church cannot be the One Body, cannot be animated by the One Spirit of Christ. It may indeed happen that a wound will at times prove salutary to a diseased body: the morbid humours may gather in it, and escape through it. But the wound must not continue to fester, or the body dies. When the Church was grown torpid, the revival of animation might unavoidably be accompanied by some convulsive throes: it might again be necessary, as of old, that He who came to send peace, should begin by sending a sword: but His desire and purpose was to send peace. Though the tumultuous tossing and raging of the waves is better than stagnation, that tossing also is only to be for a time. The Sun of Righteousness cannot be mirrored in that tossing: He can only be mirrored in the calm and peace of the waters. Let us then earnestly seek peace through Him, the peace which He alone can give, the peace which proceeds from His righteousness, which is given to all such as are made partakers of His righteousness, the peace which sets us at one with the One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all; which peace if we have, we must needs be at peace also with each other. To Him, in the Unity of the eternal Trinity, be glory in the Church throughout all ages, in earth and in heaven, world without end.

THE WORTH OF KNOWLEDGE,

OR

THE JUDGEMENT OF THE QUEEN OF SHEBA:

A SERMON PREACHT

IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF CHICHESTER,

ON THURSDAY, JUNE 9th, 1841,

IN BEHALF OF THE CHICHESTER CENTRAL SCHOOLS.

THE WORTH OF KNOWLEDGE,

OR

THE JUDGEMENT OF THE QUEEN OF SHEBA.

LUKE xi. 31.

The Queen of the South shall rise up in the judgement with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

THERE are two common mistakes with regard to knowledge, lying in opposite directions, by one or the other of which almost everybody is more or less deceived. By a certain class of men it is overvalued; by the rest it is undervalued. For such is the perversity of our nature, that in all things we are prone to err, either by excess or by defect: and it is mostly by a sort of compensation of errours, by tacking to and fro, by oscillating from one side to the other, that the world makes any advance toward truth. The mass of mankind, so far as they are left to themselves, are utterly unconscious of the worth and dignity of knowledge, and would lie contentedly in blank ignorance, with little other exertion of their intellectual faculties, than is imposed on them by the necessity of staving off the most pressing wants of the body; while they who have been taught to discern that knowledge is a good and excellent thing, too readily persuade themselves that knowledge, as a mere possession of the

understanding, is the one thing needful both for individuals and for nations. Now of both these mistakes, each of which has divers shades and degrees, a clear and satisfactory refutation may be drawn from the words of the text; in which we see on the one hand that all knowledge is to a certain extent desirable and commendable; and on the other hand that, the objects of knowledge being manifold, the business of wisdom is to observe their right order and subordination. These questions have been much canvast of late years with no little vehemence of contention; and though the violence of the controversy has somewhat subsided for the present, while most persons of soberminded discernment have come to a conclusion in accordance with that which we should deduce from the text, yet this decision is very far from having become the regulative principle of our practice, which is still grievously crampt and maimed by the influence of both the above-mentioned errours, lingering ineradicably in the bulk of men, and perpetually sprouting up afresh, however we may fancy we have got rid of them. Therefore, as these questions are intimately connected with the special occasion of our present meeting,—and as it is of primary moment to the conduct of education that the relative importance of the various objects of knowledge should be fully and distinctly understood, not merely by men of philosophical speculation, but by every teacher and every parent, as a rule whereby they are to be guided in their dealings with the children committed to their charge,—I have thought it might not be inexpedient, if I endeavoured, with God's help, to draw forth some of the light which the text throws on this paramount question of our nation

and age, and to point out how it at once corrects the undervaluers and the overvaluers of knowledge.

In the first place it will hardly be questioned that our Saviour in the text commends the conduct of the Queen of the South, in coming from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon. His words plainly imply, that the object for which she undertook her long and laborious journey was a worthy one, and that the zeal which led her to undertake it was deserving of praise and imitation,—in other words, that wisdom, such wisdom as Solomon possest, is in itself a thing to be greatly admired and sought after, and that, among the feelings and pursuits of the natural man, the love of such wisdom is one of the noblest; seeing that a queen, who left her dominions, and came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear that wisdom, is spoken of by our blessed Saviour in terms betokening approbation. As to the character of Solomon's wisdom, *the fame of which was in all nations round about*, and drew the Queen of Sheba to his court, we know that it embraced all the science of his time: *he spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon, to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.* Moreover we know, from the monuments which remain of it, that, while it comprised the whole vegetable and animal world, it was not unmindful of him who was set to be the lord over those two worlds. Indeed this latter branch of knowledge, as specially belonging to his kingly office, is that which, we are told, he besought of God in his vision, in order that he might have *an understanding heart to judge the people* placed under his rule:

and it is because God's gifts are always sun-like, and accompanied by a train of subordinate minor luminaries, that, when Solomon received *a wise and understanding heart*, to discern the feelings and purposes of mankind, he also received the power of understanding the lower orders of creatures. This knowledge of man too is that, the record of which still remains in that treasure of practical wisdom stored up in the Book of Proverbs. Hence, and from the uniform manner in which Solomon's wisdom is spoken of in Scripture, we perceive that knowledge, even the knowledge of earthly things, is in itself, within its due limits, deserving of esteem and admiration: and the same truth might be confirmed by many other passages in the Sacred Volume.

This however, it may be thought, is a proposition which needs little argument to establish it in these days; for that, if our age has any good quality, any particle of right judgement, this is the very field on which it may feel confident of surpassing all former ages; since it has emancipated itself, as its boastings will never allow us to forget, from the blindness and ignorance of its predecessors, and has thrown aside every ancient prejudice and superstition in its earnest desire to get at the truth, and busily employs all manner of stimulants for the sake of exciting men to seek after knowledge, and pays its chief homage, its ready admiration, not to rank, not to station, not to probity, but to talents. Yet I know not whether it is quite the best proof of our being able to enjoy and make use of the daylight, that, instead of enjoying and making use of it, we spend our time in talking contemptuously of the darkness we have escaped from. Nor does the love of knowledge delight to manifest itself in negations, in

disputing and refuting, in demolishing and overthrowing, but much rather in watching its objects with the patient care of a parent watching his child, in receiving their informing spirit, in combining them together according to their affinities and analogies, and in building them up into a harmonious whole. Surely too the necessity of using stimulants does not betoken strength, but rather weakness. And the exclusive homage paid to talents, that is, to the intellectual machinery which is to work up the raw material of knowledge, seems to imply that we have lost the perception of the worth of knowledge itself, that we have forgotten how the elementary faculties of the mind can only receive a definite form and substance from the truths stampt upon them. So that it may not be altogether idle and superfluous to remind the men of this generation, that knowledge in itself, according to its degree, is a thing good and laudable.

At all events there is a very large body, far the largest part of the whole nation, who have no conception, or at the utmost a very faint and confused one, that knowledge is to be desired for its own sake. In the lower orders, and in those which are called the middle classes, very few persons, here and there one, it may be, has such a notion. Among that portion of the middle classes who dwell in towns, and are engaged in trades, or in any of the mechanical arts, many persons are glad to have knowledge of a certain kind, such as may help them forward in the daily business of their outward life, and may be the means of making money, or be subservient to some other immediate practical end. But hardly one in a thousand desires knowledge for its own sake, as a thing worthy to be among the chief objects of life for an

intelligent and moral being. Yet, if the higher classes were really animated with a pure, fervent love of knowledge, it is hard to conceive that no portion of that love should be imparted to the lower. When life is strong and healthy, it will circulate through the whole body: only in cases of oppressive disease do we find a rush of blood toward the head, and a cold palsy in the nether extremities: and most deplorable is the condition of a people, when the lower classes are smitten with such a deadly palsy, when the spirit which animates the higher, does not penetrate to them. In all our efforts for the education of the lower orders, we find ourselves impeded at every other step by manifold hindrances, which arise, more or less directly, from the one main hindrance, the blank want of any real love for knowledge, of any sincere desire for it. Hence it is that parents so readily embrace the slightest inducement to keep their children away from school, and will only send them to school when they have nothing else to do with them, as though the education of a child were a matter of less importance than his gaining a few pence a day. In those who have never had the means from their own experience to understand the benefits of knowledge, to taste and see how sweet and goodly it is, this inability to appreciate it may be just what we should expect. But surely it denotes that there must have been something wrong on the part of those whose business it is to train and guide the minds of the lower orders. It must denote at least that we have set to work in the wrong way. For in simpler ages, on which we look back with scorn for their darkness, many parents were found glad to deny themselves, and to submit to great privations, for the sake of obtaining an education for their

children, which parents nowadays are quite careless about, if it stands in the way of the slightest outward gain. What is the reason of this? Is it not that in former days people were taught to discern that the business of education is to elevate a man in the scale of being, to draw forth his highest powers, to cultivate his whole humanity, not merely to fit him out with certain dexterities for making his way in life? that it was to prepare him for another world by raising him above this world, not to render him more thoroughly and sagaciously the creature and slave of this world, and by so doing almost to incapacitate him for ever rising above it? The higher doctrine was that of the teachers of the age; and certain maxims deduced from it found their way into cottages. Now for the former object they who desire it, with faith in the means of attaining it, will readily make sacrifices. But when the final result held out is nothing more than some earthly advantage, an immediate certain gain will easily be esteemed to outweigh a remote and problematical one, by those around whose hearts and spirits we throw a fresh chain of worldliness, at the very moment when we should be endeavouring to lift them up to something above the world.

These facts, it seems to me, afford too much ground for concluding, that the men of this generation,—not only the lower orders, but those who deem themselves far wiser, —cannot have that pure, ardent love for knowledge, on which they would fain plume themselves. It is true, the base unchristian dread, by which so many were haunted some years ago, lest by educating the children of the poor we should unfit them for their station in society, though it may still linger here and there, like patches

of snow in cold sunless spots long after a thaw, scarcely ventures to utter itself now. Very few, it is to be hoped, in these days dare to speak of the poor, as though the great end and purpose of their existence were to labour for the rich, and as though their intellectual and moral being were to be repressed and stunted, lest they should be indisposed to drudge like the beasts that perish, on finding out how greatly and awfully they differ from them. Still, it is to be feared, a real love of knowledge, resting upon a right-principled conviction, is far from common; and that which we have not, we cannot inspire. Were such a love commoner among those which are termed the educated classes, we should not be hampered by so many difficulties in providing for the education of the uneducated. But when we consider the use which the bulk of the educated classes make of the faculties they have acquired,—when we consider that their chief intellectual diet lies in the literature of the day,—and when we further consider what kind of knowledge, if knowledge it can be called, this literature supplies,—we shall hardly wonder that literature of this kind does not foster a strong healthy love for knowledge, or that so many are slow to believe that the ignorant will be much the better for receiving this in exchange for their ignorance.

Nor is it solely in our dealings with the children of the poor that we betray our want of a real love for knowledge. Ample evidence of it may be found in all our modes of education, from the universities down to the village-school. Everywhere it is sadly apparent that we have lost the faith in the worth of knowledge, and the faith in its power, in any other sense than as a power of producing certain outward results. We dare not trust

to the charm which knowledge in old times seldom failed to exercise on ingenuous youths. We cannot believe that they will seek it for its own sake. We bid them seek it as the means whereby they will be enabled hereafter to make their fortune, as the means of rising in the world, as the means of gaining reputation, as the means of pushing before their comrades. It is by emulation above all, that we endeavour to stimulate the young men in our universities: it is by emulation that we would spur on the boys in our pettiest schools. This is the moral steam-engine, which is to effect every purpose, to manufacture every kind of article, and to bear us over every obstacle by land or by water. And to what is emulation to stimulate the young? Not to a love of knowledge. On the contrary it declares to them that there is no such thing as a love of knowledge, or that, if there be, it is weak and powerless. It declares that truth has no charm, that learning has no charm, that the words of the wise have no charm, to draw the youthful mind toward them, and that the only temptation by which men can be induced to seek anything so unattractive, is the unchristian desire of getting ahead of their competitors. Surely an age which holds up emulation as the one main instrument of education, — an age which converts knowledge into the means of something so incalculably beneath it as outward wealth, or personal distinction and aggrandizement,— such an age can hardly be regarded as having any right esteem, or consequently any true love for knowledge. A man who marries a wife for the sake of her fortune, or for the sake of her rank, can have no true love for her; and such a marriage must needs deaden love, and degrade him who enters into it. So too must it be with those

whose minds have been wedded to Knowledge on any other ground than their love for her. They will forsake her on the first temptation. Instead of being strengthened with principles, they have been taught to be regardless of principles; and in afterlife, it may reasonably be expected, the seed which was sown in emulation, will spring up in strife and division.

Thus we see that the men of this generation, notwithstanding their vaunts that they surpass all former generations in their zeal in amassing knowledge, and in their pursuit of naked, unadulterated truth, betray, by divers plain symptoms, that they are very far from having a pure love of knowledge, or a just appreciation of its value. There are few now who would vie with the Queen of Sheba, and journey from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, or even to gain that wisdom; though multitudes would readily go as far to see the riches of Solomon, and almost everybody to gain his riches. Indeed only when Wisdom proclaims, *Riches and honour are with me*, can we believe that anybody will listen to her voice: and the chief part of those who do thus listen, turn away, when they hear that her riches is *durable*, not perishable *riches*, and her honour *righteousness*. Yet on the other hand, as it is the nature of extremes to be ever found standing side by side, there never was an age when knowledge was more overvalued. I do not mean, absolutely, nor the highest kind of knowledge; for that can hardly be esteemed beyond its worth. The knowledge which we overvalue is of an inferior kind, both in itself, being lifeless and external and empirical, and with reference to its objects; its dealings being, not with the highest objects of human contemplation and

speculation, but about lower objects, about the things of this world, and about the best ways of arranging and systematizing, with a view to taking possession of them. One of the strange outbreaks of this exaggerated estimation of knowledge is sufficiently notorious. All who take an interest in the questions which are agitating men's minds with regard to the wellbeing of society, have heard of the panacea which has been devised for the evils of the times by I know not what lessons of political and domestic economy. The very persons who hold that men cannot be allured to seek knowledge, except as the means of gratifying some of their more sordid and selfish appetites, have also, some of them, maintained that such knowledge, poor and impotent as knowledge so pursued must needs be, will have power to quell men's tumultuous passions, and to reduce the insurgent elements of society to order and harmony. The time will not allow me to enter into any course of argument to demonstrate the fallacy of such a proposition; nor can it be needful in this place. I merely refer to it as one among many symptoms of the tendency to overvalue knowledge, a tendency prevalent among the very persons who in other respects undervalue it. The only refutation which I will oppose to them is supplied by the last words of our text, *A greater than Solomon is here.* When our Lord commended the Queen of Sheba for coming from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, it was plainly implied in His words, that Solomon was at that time the wisest man upon earth. Therefore did her zeal find favour in His eyes. But if He who was greater than Solomon, had been living in the days of Solomon, the case would have been changed. The Queen of Sheba would not

then have come to Solomon, but to the greater Teacher; and with Him would she have communed of all that was in her heart; with Him, with whom we may commune of whatever is in our hearts also,—to whom we may reveal all their secrets, all their weaknesses, all their doubts, all their frailties,—who knows them all, and yet to whom we may reveal them,—and who, if we do reveal them to Him in humble and penitent yearning, will look with compassion upon them, and will answer our questions with the silent whisperings of His Spirit. This is the Teacher, to whom, had He been living in her days, the Queen of Sheba would have come. This is the Teacher, to whom it behoves us to come, favoured as we are in having been born in these latter ages, after the revelation of the mystery hidden from the beginning,—to whom it behoves us to come ourselves, and to bring our children, that we may all be filled with that saving knowledge which He alone can bestow.

This knowledge it is impossible to overvalue. This however is not the knowledge which the soothsayers and magicians of these days are fond of exalting. Their knowledge is nearer akin to the knowledge of the Egyptians and of the Chaldeans. It is not unlike the wisdom of Solomon, according to the representation of it given just now, as a knowledge of the objects of the outward world, and a reflexion on the ways and dealings of men. Not however that their wisdom comes up to that of Solomon. It wants that feature in Solomon's wisdom, which I omitted to mention above, but which gives it its highest value and truth. As Solomon's wisdom descended from above, there is a perpetual reference in it to the wisdom from above; and this is what distinguishes the Book of

Proverbs from all similar collections. It is not a collection of mere prudential aphorisms, inculcating the business of this life, and the art of dealing with mankind, looking wholly at worldly gain and loss; but the fear of God is the beginning and the end of it, and runs through every precept, and is the principle of every maxim. Now this very principle is left out of sight in the worldly wisdom of these days. Its supreme doctrine is a kind of science, or philosophy, as its votaries are fond of terming it, an empirical, reflective, analytical science of man's nature, —a science which resolves all things into their elements, but which, having strayed from the one Principle and Source of unity, cannot recombine them again,—a science which, like the lying harlot, betrays that it is not the true parent of its objects, — that it does not possess their seminal ideas, — by consenting to their being split into parts, and by leaving them thus divided. So long as knowledge is sanctified by the spiritual element which sanctified the wisdom of Solomon, it cannot be overvalued: the fear of God will keep it in its due place: it will seek the source of law, not in the attractions of inanimate things, but in the wisdom and ordinance of God: the chain wherewith it surrounds the earth, will be fixt to a staple above. But, as Science is ever mainly employed about the things of the creation, in contemplating the wonderful proofs of wisdom which the universe displays by the symmetry and harmonious adjustment and working together of all its parts, there has been a constant aptness in Science to forget the Creator, while gazing on the creature. Indeed the story of the life of Solomon may be regarded as in some measure a type of the history of Science, in most nations in which it has flourisht. As every good

gift comes from above, Science also, like every other higher intellectual exercise, has always sprung at the first from some sort of perception of a Divine Unity pervading the multitudinous objects presented to our minds by our senses, from some perception of a Divine Cause, of a Divine Ruler, of a Divine Order, from a faith in something invisible. But here again the visible things in course of time have mostly eclipst the invisible; and the same dismal and appalling degradation, which we deplore in the old age of Solomon, has been exemplified again and again in the history of Philosophy and Science. They have fallen from the worship of the Creator to the idolatry of the creature: they have lost their perception of a spiritual principle, and have been fascinated and bewildered by material forms. Religion, which in early ages, under one form or other, is the mother of the arts and sciences, is gradually supplanted by her offspring, and driven more and more into the background: and thus at length it comes to pass that systems of education gain currency, as has been seen even in the universities of Christian countries, where those branches of science which treat especially of religious truth and doctrine, are almost wholly neglected.

Such being the obstinate and almost unconquerable proneness of man, in the pursuit of knowledge, as in all other things, to follow the bent of his carnal nature, and to give himself up to that which addresses itself to his worldly interests and sympathies, it is the duty of the Church to be ever sounding her heavenly trumpet, with its clear, sweet notes breathing out of a higher and purer region,—to be for ever admonishing and reminding man, that there is something better and nobler than himself, after which he must continually strive, toward which he

must lift himself up, to which he must seek to be lifted up, and that, if his amphibious nature does not rise into the higher element, for which it was destined, it will infallibly be swallowed up by the lower, and gradually debased into a more thorough congeniality thereto. It is the duty of the Church to be for ever admonishing and exhorting her people, that, in the pursuit of knowledge, they are not to be content with coming to hear the wisdom of Solomon; much less with coming to those whose wisdom stops short of what was best in the wisdom of Solomon: but they are to come to Him who is immeasurably greater and wiser than Solomon, and who is still here, here in England now, as really and effectually as He was in Judea when He spoke the words of the text. They are to come to Him, not, like the Queen of Sheba, from the utmost parts of the earth; they are not to travel over the earth in search of Him: for He has come to us, in whatsoever region or quarter of the earth we may be dwelling, and, so infinite is His grace, has built Himself a house in every parish, to which all may come, and where all may hear His words of wisdom far surpassing that of the wisest of mankind. How terrible then, yet how just must be our condemnation,—how will the Queen of the South rise up in the judgement and condemn us,—if we, who have a Teacher so much greater than Solomon, a Teacher whose wisdom has been confirmed by the never-varying experience of eighteen centuries, and who have no journey to undertake in search of Him, still refuse to come to Him, nay, turn away and depart from Him although He comes to us, and will not hear Him! It may seem strange that this should be so, when our coming to Him is represented to be thus easy: but alas! it is not easy;

for, though we are not to come from the utmost parts of the earth, we are to come from the lowest depths of our carnal nature, from the furthest region of our godless souls.

We are to come to Him moreover, and to bring our children to Him, from the first, not through the school of Solomon, but immediately. If He were not here, if He were far off, we could not do so: we should have to go through a course of previous training, before we could presume to approach Him. But this is the great and blessed privilege of the Gospel. In the education of the world, God ordained that mankind should pass in the first instance through the Patriarchal school, and then through the school of the Law, and then through the school of the Prophets, in order that they might thus be trained and fitted for receiving the fulness of wisdom in the school of His Incarnate Son. But we, who have the privilege of being born in these latter days, when all that the Patriarchs lookt forward to, all that the Law foreshadowed, and the Prophets foretold, has come to pass,—we are no longer under the hard necessity of going through this preparatory discipline. For this is the blessed character of the wisdom brought down from heaven by Him who is greater than Solomon, that it is revealed to babes. Yea, not only is it revealed to them, along with the wise and prudent; but, as our Lord gives thanks to His Heavenly Father, it is revealed to babes, and not to the wise and prudent: and surely, brethren, we should all join with Him in giving thanks that this is so,—that we have no high ladder to scale, stair above stair,—that we have no range of mountains to climb, Alp beyond Alp, by our own strength,—that we are not set to make ourselves wings wherewith to pierce through the lowest to the

highest heaven,—but that, wherever we may be, in the lowliest spot on the whole earth, we may find our Teacher there, if we will but open our eyes to see Him, and may listen to His wisdom there, if we will open our ears to hear Him. The wisdom and prudence of this world are so far from being a necessary preparative for the wisdom of the Gospel, that they have often been found to be much rather an impediment to it. For this reason we are not to bring our children to the school of Solomon, before we bring them to Christ: we are not to train their eyes in measuring the high places upon earth, before we allow them to look up to heaven: heaven "bends over all;" and every child is to look up to it from the first opening of its eyes: indeed the child that is lying in its weakness on the ground, looks up more naturally than the man who is standing in his strength. We are not to bring our children to the school of Solomon, lest they too fall into the errour of Solomon; we are not to bring them into the school of the Egyptians, lest they too be tempted by the fleshpots of Egypt; we are not to bring them into the school of the Chaldeans, lest they too bow down to the visible host of heaven: for this is the deceitfulness of visible things, that, though to the unsealed eye they reveal the wisdom of their Maker, they beguile the natural eye into fancying that the wisdom is in them; and thus, the more it discerns of that wisdom, the more it is inclined to make them the chief and sole objects of its worship. Therefore we are not to let our children be trained in secular knowledge, as a preparation for religious knowledge, being certified by the history of Solomon, and by ever-renewed experience in all classes of life, as well as by our Lord's words, that such a preparation may often

prove a grievous hindrance. Nor are we to recognize a separation and division between secular knowledge, as it is called, and religious knowledge, and to halve the souls of our children between the two. This would be renewing the sin of the pretended mother, and establishing a union and co-ordination between God and Mammon, when we know that the carnal heart in such a case will ever turn away from God, and cleave wholly to Mammon. For what is Mammon, but the world, as viewed by the carnal heart and mind, without reference to God? Wherefore secular knowledge, severed from religious knowledge, is merely the knowledge of Mammon.

What then! are we not to teach our children any portion of what is called secular knowledge? Yes assuredly. The wisdom of Solomon did not cease to be wisdom, after the wisdom of Christ came into the world: it only ceast to be the highest and most perfect wisdom; but in its own place it retained its dignity and worth. As our children are set to live and act in this world, we should teach them whatever is fitted for qualifying them to act vigorously and efficiently, without waste of their powers. Moreover we should teach them whatever we can, that will open their eyes to behold the wonderful works of their heavenly Father, whereby they are surrounded. We should teach them too, so far as we may, whatever will enable them to understand their position and duties as men and Englishmen. Only these lessons should be given to them, not insulatedly, not independently of the rest of their teaching, but connectedly, as parts of a great whole, of an organic system of truth, every part of which is illumined and animated by the light flowing to it from the centre. Let not this be deemed an exaggerated

phrase as applied to that scantling of knowledge, which is the utmost the poor can receive. The lowliest plant belongs to the same order of being with the loftiest tree, and is nearer akin to it than a mast or a maypole: for it has a living power in it; and this, not the size, forms the essential character. Meanwhile we should bear ever in mind, that the great purpose for which Solomon was endowed with all his wisdom, was, that he might build the temple of God in the beauty of holiness: and we should tell our children that they too have the same glorious work to accomplish,—that they too have a temple of God to build, even in their own hearts and souls,—that all their gifts, natural or acquired, are to be regarded as materials for the building of this temple,—and that, poor and lowly as it may seem, if it be but clean and simple, the Holy Ghost will dwell in it, and it will endure for ever.

My brethren, the Judgement of Solomon has been reiterated in these days. The Church has claimed the whole education of her children, all or none: there has been a party in the State, who have cried out in behalf of a divided education. The nation has had to decide between them; and we cannot doubt that the decision has been in favour of the Church. The Church tells her children that they are the children of God, that He who is greater than Solomon is here, that they have been brought to Him, that He has made them the children of God,—that they are to live as such amid the temptations of the world, that they are to stand as such against the assaults of the devil,—and that, if they strive so to live, and so to stand, they will have the Spirit of God to guide and support them, and the strength of God wherewith to overcome their foes. On the other hand,

the wizards of this world tell them, that they can have no wisdom, except their own, to guide them, that they can have no strength, except their own, to support them, and that therefore they must try to get all the knowledge they can scrape up, in order that they may make their way through life, without being cheated or trampled on by their neighbours, and may gain all they can from them and over them. Now you, my brethren, — may I not assume it?—are convinced that the former is the true principle of Christian education; and you have maintained that it is so during the recent controversies. This however is not enough. Contentiousness, and unreasoning prepossessions, and jealousy, and the notion that our own honour or interest is implicated, may lead us to fight for a principle, when it is attackt: but, if we hold it as a living principle, we must be equally zealous in maintaining it, when there is no opposition to inflame our zeal. The true way of asserting a principle is to act upon it, to follow it out diligently, consistently, into all its workings, to realize it in all its practical details. And this, which is a duty incumbent upon every Christian, is a responsibility pressing especially upon us, to whom a distincter perception of this truth has been granted, and who have undertaken the office of asserting it before the English nation. A small portion of this work you are this day called on to perform, by contributing to the support of the Central Schools in this city. A small portion, I say, a very small portion: for let none think that he has fulfilled his duty to the cause of Christian education for the year, when he has put his soverein, or even if he were to put a hundred sovereins, into the plate today. We cannot so easily get quit of our duties: we cannot

discharge them by a single payment. God be praised that we cannot! that they abide with us always, and go with us whithersoever we go, to brace us up against the relaxing temptations of indolence, and to fence us in from the insinuating snares of self-indulgence. In every duty what we owe is ourselves, our substance, where it is needed, but still more our hearts and souls, our thoughts and wishes, our diligence and perseverance in taking advantage of every means and opportunity for furthering the cause entrusted to our keeping.

I was led just now to note divers indications, which seem to shew that there is little genuine love of knowledge in these days; and inasmuch as the only sure proof that a man is animated by a sincere love of truth, and by an earnest faith in its preciousness, is his active desire to make the truth known as widely as possible, the slackness of most of our efforts hitherto for the promotion and improvement of our national education might be added to the list. It may be thought perchance that this our meeting here today is a sign that in this city at least such a slackness does not prevail. But is this indeed so, brethren? Or does not the necessity of such a meeting for the support of the funds of your school rather betoken that, even in this large and rich cathedral city, the stimulus of an annual sermon is needed to excite the inhabitants to perform such a common, simple, every-day duty as that of providing for the Christian education of the poor in their immediate neighbourhood? How then will they ever be brought to perform any great work of Christian charity, when such forces and motives must be called into play, before they can be brought to perform this, one of its least works? Verily, if we look at them

from this point of view, such meetings seem rather to cry *Shame* against the Christian nation in which the spirit of charity is so torpid: and in this way, if they remind us of our shortcomings, instead of puffing us up on account of the grand works we are apt to fancy we have been engaged in, they may conduce to edification.

There is another view of them however, in which they are indeed deeply interesting. We believe and learn from our eyes more readily than from any other teachers. We are imprest by the spectacle of multitudes; and though a slight calculation would convince us that all these children, and far more, are growing up here close around us, the effect of such a calculation would be much feebler. But when we see them thus gathered together, as they are here today, here in the house of God, how can we fail to bethink ourselves that every child whom we see has an immortal soul, has been made a child of God, has been made an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven, —that this inheritance may be secured,—and alas! alas! that it may be forfeited? nay, that we too may be instrumental, through God's blessing, in securing it, — that we too, by our negligence, by our indolence, by our niggardliness, may contribute toward its forfeiture? It was but a week ago, on this very day sennight, that I was present at one of the sublimest spectacles which this earth can afford, the assembly of the children of all the Charity Schools in London, ranged in tier above tier beneath the dome of our magnificent cathedral. It is a sight of almost overpowering grandeur and awfulness. Nine or ten thousand childly souls stand round in array; nine or ten thousand childly voices join in singing the praises of God, in singing the song which the angels sing before

the throne of the Saviour. And that which they do now, they may do for ever before that throne; or their heavenly songs may be quencht and drowned in endless wailings and gnashings of teeth. So may it be, my brethren, with these children whom you now see before you: so may it be with every child that ever meets our eyes. O let us keep this constantly in mind! then shall we learn to look upon a child as a holy and awful being. We shall remember that, as Christ was Himself an Infant and a Child, so He is still in every infant and child that has been made a member of His sacred Body: and as it was in His childhood that gifts were brought to Him of the riches of this world, so shall we rejoice to hallow our riches by bringing gifts of them to the children in whom He is.

Our text itself too, if we interpret it rightly, will admonish us that we ought to bring our best gifts to Christ. The Queen of Sheba, when she came to hear the wisdom of Solomon, came from the utmost parts of the earth. This, I observed above, we are not called to do, although the wisdom we are to hear is that of One who is far greater than Solomon. For He who is greater than Solomon is *here*, here in England, here in every part of His Church, through every region of the earth; and they who have once been brought to Him in the arms of His Church, may always find Him, may always come to Him: in whatsoever part of the land they may be living, they may hear His words of heavenly wisdom. There have indeed been times in the history of the Church, when this blessed truth was more or less obscured, when people fancied they must make pilgrimages to distant shrines, or to the land which had the privilege of bearing the human form of the Saviour, in

order to come to Him who is greater than Solomon. It was forgotten that we are no longer living under the covenant of outward forms and types, but under the revelation of the Spirit of truth. It was not discerned with sufficient distinctness, that the journey we are to take in coming to Him who is greater than Solomon, is not from the utmost parts of the earth, but, as I have already reminded you, from the utmost parts, from the nethermost depths of our carnal godless nature. Now in these days the errour just spoken of is not one we are likely to fall into: we are not likely to make pilgrimages in search of Christ. Easily and readily as we are transported from one end of the earth to the other, and though we undertake such journies without hesitation for every imaginable inducement, we are not likely to undertake them for the sake of coming to Him who is greater than Solomon. Thus far at least we may be said to know that He is *here*,—negatively, in that we know we are not to seek Him in any other region of the earth. But if we are content with this mere negative riddance of errour, —if, instead of believing that we are to seek Christ at Jerusalem, or at Loretto, or at Compostella, or at Glastonbury, we take up with the belief that He is nowhere,— our gain will be small indeed, less than our loss: for it were far better to believe that we may find access to God somewhere upon earth, than that we can find it nowhere. If we seek Him somewhere, although it be far off, we may at length find out that He is near at hand: whereas, if we seek Him nowhere, we shall never find Him. Much care is always needed, lest, in casting off the superstitious observance of the types that have past away, we also reject the sacred realities which were shadowed forth in them.

While we cling to the persuasion that Christ is *here*, that He is not to be sought far off, but to be found by those who will seek Him in every part of His Church, let us call to mind that He is not *here*, so as to be found by us if we lie torpidly in the dark depths of our carnal nature: He is not *here*, in the land of sin: so long as we continue in our sins, we cannot find Him, we cannot hear His heavenly wisdom. From the land of sin, from the land of our carnal nature, from the world, and its thoughts and its feelings, its passions and its desires, we must come forth. If we tarry in the world, if our hearts stick fast in the pride and luxury and unbelief of the world, we shall not find the wisdom of Christ.

Moreover, when the Queen of Sheba came from her own country to hear the wisdom of Christ, she did not come emptyhanded. She came, we read, *with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones. And she gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as those which the Queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.* Her journey itself was a strong proof of her desire to hear his wisdom: but she did not think this enough: she desired to give a further proof of her conviction that *the merchandise of wisdom is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold,*—that *it is more precious than rubies,* and that *all things we can desire are not to be compared with it.* So too would it be with us, if we longed heartily after the wisdom of Christ, for ourselves, and for our brethren. We should not only bring our hearts to Christ, but plenteous offerings of our worldly riches: if we do not, our riches will be a clog and a chain,

draging back our hearts to the place where our treasure is. This therefore would be the plainest proof that England does indeed love wisdom, if she shewed herself as ready as the Queen of Sheba in giving of her riches for its sake. And when I speak of England, I do not mean the government and state of England, but every Englishman, every man who feels that his life and character and honour are bound up with his country. When such a spirit is diffused widely through the land, when every true Englishman has a heart as liberal as the Queen of Sheba, to bring his gold and spices and precious stones as offerings to Him who is greater than Solomon, then may we hope that, as *King Solomon gave the Queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she askt, beside what he gave her of his royal bounty*, so will our heavenly King and Teacher give us all we ask and desire, beside that which He gives us of His royal bounty. His highest, most precious gift is given to us in free royal grace, without money and without price: but only if a spirit of largehearted munificence spreads through England, can we hope that our wishes for the temporal prosperity and moral wellbeing of our country will be fulfilled. Then, and then alone, will our sons grow up as the young plants, and our daughters be as the polisht corners of the temple: then, but not till then, shall we taste the blessedness promist to the people who have the Lord for their God.

THE DUTY OF PREPARING THE WAY OF THE LORD:

A SERMON PREACHT

IN THE CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS, LEWES,

ON FRIDAY, APRIL 23rd, 1842,

ON OCCASION OF A MEETING

FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MISSIONARY ASSOCIATIONS

IN LEWES AND THE SURROUNDING PARISHES.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

HENRY THOMAS, EARL OF CHICHESTER.

My dear Lord,

I cannot deny myself the pleasure of dedicating this Sermon to you. Indeed there are several considerations, which seem to convert this pleasure into a duty,—your position at the head of one of the chief Missionary Societies in our Church,—the zealous interest you take in whatever tends to promote the Glory of God, and to enlarge and strengthen the Kingdom of His Son, both at home and abroad,—and your earnest desire to further the spiritual no less than the temporal welfare of the town of Lewes, which, as it has the happiness of being placed in your immediate neighbourhood, you are thus led to regard as having a special claim to your tutelary care.

It is a great happiness when our duties thus coincide with our pleasures; and it is a happiness which, you well know, is ever bountifully granted by the Giver of all good gifts to the Christian. Even heathen philosophers were enabled to discern, that duty is, or at least ought to be, the one source of all genuine pleasure: but, as the love whereby it becomes so had not yet been made manifest, their doctrine was held to be paradoxical, and was impugned

too successfully by those who asserted the opposite proposition, that the pursuit of pleasure is the only duty. Christianity however has explained and reconciled these seeming contradictions: for, when the love of Christ constrains us, our affections themselves draw us to do, and to find our highest delight in doing that, which at the same time we recognize that we are bound by every obligation to do for the sake of our Saviour and Redeemer. Still indeed, in the warfare of extermination against evil, which we are called to wage both within ourselves and without, the performance of duty will often be painful; but the love of Christ has a transubstantiating power of changing that pain into pleasure.

This union of pleasure with duty extends through all the relations of the Christian life, and, in proportion as that life pervades any community, will branch through all the relations of that community. To me a distincter perception of this truth has been frequently afforded, ever since I was raised to an office which has given me a wider sphere of action in the Church. All manner of cheering encouragements have been vouchsafed to me; but none has been more cheering, than the ready, cordial, friendly, active co-operation, which I have received from you, in everything that has been undertaken for the good of this Diocese. It is indeed a happy day for a country, when those who are foremost in rank are also foremost in every good work. O that God, looking down in mercy upon England, would endow a greater portion of our aristocracy and gentry with a zeal like yours! We should then be far better prepared to meet the coming dangers. With a more confident assurance do I pray that He may

continually make you still more active in His service, and clothe you more and more richly with every grace of His Spirit. And may He render me duly thankful for the blessing of your friendship and help.

Your grateful and affectionate Servant

J. C. HARE.

THE DUTY OF PREPARING THE WAY OF THE LORD.

ISAIAH xl. 3.

Prepare ye the way of the Lord: make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

THERE is something wonderfully grand in these words. The very sound of them thrills us with awe and admiration, when we hear them read in church, or sung, as many of you doubtless have heard them, in one of the noblest works of Christian music. No words can more strongly bear the mark of inspiration. Even without reference to their special prophetic signification, and to the accomplishment which they received centuries after they were spoken, it is plain on the very face of them that they are a message from God. And what a divine fulness of meaning there is in them! They bring a command from God. By a single word they remind the persons to whom that command is addrest, of their dreary, forlorn condition, in the midst of *a desert.* They direct these persons what they are to do in this desert: they are *to prepare a way, to make straight a highway;* a work which, in its literal sense, is of scanty interest to the workmen, and yields them little pleasure, and which moreover is commoner in thickly peopled countries than in deserts: but this way is to be a way of a new kind: it is to be *the way of the Lord, a highway for our God.* Thus the work becomes one of

the utmost importance, and in which it is a privilege and glory to be employed: nay, the words themselves imply that it must be a great blessing to be employed in such a work. For, as the command comes from God, and none of God's words can be vain,—as it is impossible that He should command a work, unless it be His purpose that the end, for which that work is commanded, should be fulfilled, conditionally at least, provided the preparatory work be completed, if not absolutely,—it is clear that the words of the text convey a promise and assurance, that, if the way be prepared, if the highway be made straight, the Lord God will pass along it.

Thus much is plain on the face of the words themselves, without regard to their specific place in Scripture, or to any subsequent references to them in other parts of the Bible, whereby their purport may be more distinctly brought out. But when we have seen thus much of the glorious meaning contained in these words, we must needs wish to discern still more of it. We cannot be content to turn away and pass on: we cannot well refrain from asking, To whom was this command delivered? who were the people living in the desert? and in what desert? what manner of way were they to prepare in it? has that way ever been prepared? has the Lord God ever past over it? does He pass over it still? O where? let us hasten to the place, if so be we may see Him pass.

Now when we look into that portion of the prophetic volume, from which the text is taken, and at the head of which it stands, we find that in one sense, the literal and primary sense, both the command and the promise involved in it were fulfilled more than two thousand years ago. For there can be no question that the text, like the chief

part of the books of the prophets, had an immediate reference to the events of the time, and received an immediate accomplishment. The desert was indeed such: it was the desert which then, as ever, separated Babylon from Jerusalem, and which all such as quit Babylon, and desire to go to Jerusalem, must traverse. The way too was prepared; the highway was made straight; and God did pass over it. He past over it, when He led His chosen people from Babylon through the wilderness back to His city upon His holy hill of Zion, even as He had led them through the wilderness out of Egypt, He who alone can lead men, whether out of Egypt or out of Babylon, to a place where they shall see Him walking before them. God did pass over the way, and brought the children of Israel along it from Babylon back to Jerusalem. Now even if the bearing of the text did not reach beyond this one event, it would still be a passage of much interest. For when regarded from the lowest point of view, as a mere historical event, this return of the Jews from their captivity is a wonderful crisis in their history, a crisis without a parallel in the history of the rest of the world. Nations, after they have reacht a high pitch of power and glory, have fallen and perisht: in this there is nothing singular. The law of death,—*Thou shalt surely die*,—was not merely uttered against every child of man individually, but against every combination and society also in which men can unite themselves together; the Church of God alone excepted, which, as proceeding from Him, is indestructible. Life is prolonged by such unions; but death is not averted. Nations will endure for many generations; but their turn also has always come hitherto, sooner or later. Often too has the arrival of that term been accelerated by human

agency. Death has many instruments wherewith to accomplish his purposes; but the most destructive and the commonest have ever been the sins of mankind. For this has from the first been the work of Sin, to feed and glut her insatiable child; and in this her work man has always lent ready aid. As though the onslaught of Death, according to the course of nature, were not sure and rapid enough, men have hurried him on by their clamorous vices, and have rusht over the earth to prepare his way. Ambition has drawn his sword; Cruelty has wielded his scourge; Fraud has darted his arrows; the Lusts of the Flesh have mixt his poisons, and sow slow-working seeds in their victims, of which anon he comes and reaps the harvest. Nor is it solely the decay of individuals that is hastened by the sins of mankind. As man draws his sword to slay his brother, so do nations also go forth sword in hand to destroy each other. Here again men chide Death for being so tardy, and bid him quicken his onset, and blot their rival out of the number of nations. This therefore, although no mark of Death's footsteps, as he has walkt to and fro among the generations of men, can be contemplated without a stirring of the waters pent up in our bosoms, is not that which is peculiar and singular in the event of Jewish history referred to in the text. The destruction of Jerusalem and of the kingdom of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar is an occurrence the like of which has often come to the top, among the revolving destinies of mankind. It merely shews how the law of death has gone forth against nations, as well as against individuals; and how for the march of Death against nations also man will prepare a way, and make straight a highway. This is the ordinary course of humanity:

as men both die and kill, so do nations perish and destroy. The peculiar and singular feature in Jewish history is not this, but the reverse of this; not that the kingdom of Judah was destroyed, but that it was restored. This is what marks out the Jewish history from all other histories, and shews that a higher power was overruling the murderous ministrations of man: and hence the history of the Jews is not, like other histories, an example of the usual course of human life, but a type and foreshadowing of a higher order, by which a way is opened out of death to a new life. So that, when we learn that the way was to be prepared, the highway to be made straight, in order that the nation which had perisht, might come back from the grave over it, we may feel sure even from this that the way which was to be prepared, was to be the way of the Lord, who alone can bring back the dead to life,—that the highway which was to be made straight, was a highway for our God.

Thus, even confining ourselves to this its primary meaning, the text, we perceive, is rich in matter for deep and wondering contemplation, in that it sets forth the immediate workings of God in history, counteracting the death-dealing operations of man, and calling back those whom man had destroyed, to live a new life. This is the prophetic thread, which runs through the history of the Jews, and makes it the counterpart and complement to all other histories. While other histories tell us how nations have arisen, and grown up, and spread, and flourisht, and decayed, and perisht, in accordance with that great law to which man and all his works are subject, the history of the Hebrews on the other hand foreshews and typifies a higher, spiritual order. At its very outset it shews us how by nature we

are born in bondage, and how we need to be delivered out of that bondage by a power beyond ourselves, and even beyond our conceptions and desires, — how we need to be raised by the power of God out of the corruption of our natural life, before we can become His people; wherefore we are reminded of this second supernatural birth of the Jewish nation every time a child is brought to the baptismal font. In like manner that restoration of the Jewish nation, to which the text refers, is a type of the twofold resurrection to which God has called mankind. It is a type of the first resurrection from sin, and also of the second resurrection from death; as may be seen for instance in the vision where Ezekiel, inverting this order between the type and the antitype, beholds a sign of the resurrection of the Jewish nation in the valley of dry bones: and as both these resurrections are God's works, which can only be wrought by Him in us, the helpless children of sin and death, whatever preparations may be made either for the one or for the other, must be preparations for the coming of the Lord.

If we were to follow out this view of the text, we should be led to perceive that it is not merely of deep interest in consequence of the wonderful historical event to which it refers, but also still more from its bearings upon our spiritual life, upon the path to be trodden by every one who desires to pass out of death into life, from Babylon to Zion. We might discern this from the text itself, even if there were no other passages in Scripture directing us thus to apply it. But we all know that there are other most impressive and memorable passages, standing in the very front of the Gospels, which declare that the words of the text were not merely uttered with reference to the

restoration of the Israelites out of their Captivity, but also in anticipation of a far higher, more glorious, and more blessed event, in comparison with the importance of which that restoration of the Israelites fades away. We know that by all the Evangelists, and by the holy Baptist himself, the words of the text are declared to apply in their fullest force to his sacred mission, and that this was the special work for which he was set apart from the womb, in order that he might *prepare the way of the Lord, and make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*

This was the Baptist's great work; and this work, we know, he accomplisht. He spent his whole life in preparing the way of the Lord; and the promise involved in the command, we know, was also fulfilled. When the fulness of time was come, the Lord did pass over the way which had been prepared for Him. But does the command in the text, and the accompanying promise, sink back therefore into the bygone ages of history? Is its sole reference to events long since past, and its sole value, that it attests how those events were foreseen ages before? Has it no immediate bearing on our present condition and duties and hopes? Surely all the events in the sacred story had not merely a single outward temporal existence, but were meant to be ever renewed spiritually. That which Christ did once, when He was on earth in the flesh, is to take place in a certain sense over again in the hearts of all His servants. That which was done by His forerunner and His disciples, when He was dwelling with them and amongst them, must be done over again by us now, even as the relation in which we now stand to Him is, or ought to be, the same as that in which they stood. Or was it enough that Christ came once, and

trod the way which had been prepared for Him? Surely, if He had not purpost to come to others, beside those to whom He came in the body, His coming would never have been ordained from the beginning, or announced so distinctly centuries before. The evangelical history would then only have borne witness how the wisdom and power and mercy of God had been utterly baffled by the obstinate wickedness of mankind. When we look round on the face of the earth, we cannot but be convinced that, although the Baptist laboured so diligently, and gave up his life in preparing the way of the Lord, the way of the Lord has not yet been prepared sufficiently: it is not yet wide enough: it does not yet reach over the earth: mankind have not yet, cannot yet walk after the Lord along it. Even the roads made for earthly traffic need continual repairs; else the storms will wash them away, or time and the changes of the seasons will break them up. So too is it with the way of the Lord: the pleasures of the world are ever undermining it; the storms of the world are striving to break it up and wash it away; and unless the servants of the Lord laboured perseveringly to maintain and repair it, no trace of it would ere long be seen upon earth. So that the command in the text was not merely issued primarily to the children of Israel in the days when God was pleased to deliver them out of their Captivity, and to set up His people again in the land which He had given to their fathers; nor merely to them, and secondarily to the holy Messenger, who was sent, with the power of Elias, to prepare a way for the coming of the Saviour; but also, in a wider sense, to all the servants of the Lord in all ages, from the Apostles who dwelt before His sight, down to the end of the world,—to every one

whom He has called to be among His labourers, in order to the preparation of that blessed time, when He will walk to and fro upon the earth, holding communion with all its inhabitants, even as He walkt with Adam, and talkt with Adam in Paradise.

But who are they, whom God has appointed to labour for Him in this great and glorious work of preparing His way before Him? In the first place, the application of these words to the holy Baptist would direct our thoughts to those who are in like manner specially ordained and set apart for the ministry of preparing the way of the Lord, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. And if my main purpose in this Sermon were to preach to my brethren in this sacred ministry, it would be my endeavour to draw forth some of those treasures of divine truth,—the treasures of exhortation, and admonition, and warning, and encouragement,—which are stored up for us in the text. I should have tried to point out how these few words comprise the sum and substance of our duties,—how it behoves us to bear always in mind, that this, and nothing short of this, is the task to which we are called,—how our business is not merely, or mainly, to make our parishioners comfortable and industrious and sober and honest and peaceable and kindly, but to prepare the way of the Lord in their hearts,—how, if we are enabled to effect this, we shall at the same time do all the rest, but, if we aim at anything less than this, we shall assuredly fail, both in accomplishing that which ought to be the end of all our efforts, and that lesser end, on which we may have fixt our desires. Again, the text would have led me to consider the high motives which the text places before us to spur us on in

our work,—how we are commissioned to prepare the Lord's way in the midst of a desert, and to bring His people out of that desert; and this very expression might have furnisht me with encouragement for those who, through the infirmity of their nature, may be over-ready to despond at the sight of the desert around them: for it teaches us that this is the region in which we are especially set to work,—not in a garden, as Adam was in Eden, where the flowers and fruits sprang up as the natural growth of the soil,—not in a rich, cultivated country, where the labour of the husbandman is rewarded by a plenteous crop, —but in a desert, where consequently there is greater need of our labour, and where stronger motives of compassion constrain us to help in saving and feeding those who are wandering and pining in that desert, and who, without timely care, must perish. Moreover the text would have warranted me in urging a still higher motive for our diligence, a motive drawn from the end set before us, from the assurance given to us by Him whose word can never fail, that, if we do indeed labour strenuously and perseveringly in preparing His way, if we make straight a highway for Him in the hearts of our people, He will pass over it. He who, when His way had been prepared in the wilderness, led back the children of Israel out of their captivity to Zion,—He who, when the Baptist had prepared His way by calling the Jews to repentance, walkt along that way, with the Gospel of the Kingdom in His hand, in the person of His Incarnate Son,—He still desires to walk over the earth, to walk over every part of it, in the sight of His redeemed people, if so be that His servants and messengers will give up their hearts

and souls and minds and strength to the blessed work of preparing a way for Him.

I am not set here however today to preach to my brethren in the ministry: I am set to preach to all of you, to whatever class or order you may belong, as many as are assembled today here in this house of God: and it would little profit the chief part of you, were I to confine myself to speaking to a few amongst you, when the rest, it is certain, must be still more in need of godly admonition and exhortation. Therefore I should have chosen my text very injudiciously, if it afforded no occasion for such admonition and exhortation as may come home to the bosom and the business of every Christian. But is this the case? Are the consecrated ministers of the Gospel the only persons who are ordained to prepare the way of the Lord, and to make straight a highway for our God? Surely this cannot be: indeed if this were so, if others did not work along with them, if you, my lay brethren, do not work along with us, your ministers, in preparing the way of the Lord, our labour must be vain: so far as you are concerned, at all events, it must be utterly vain. Even when our Lord Himself was upon earth, His mighty, soulpiercing words often fell powerless at the moment, because men would not open their ears, and would not soften their hearts, and would not cast down their imaginations, and would not throw away those sins, which stopt their ears, and hardened their hearts, and puft out their imaginations. So too must it be now. If you, my brethren, will not work along with us, even though the Spirit of God put His word into our mouths, that word will produce no effect upon you. If you stop your ears,—

if you do not unstop them,—if you do not purge them of that which makes them deaf to the voice of the heavenly Charmer,—you will not hear it. If you harden your hearts,—if you do not strive to tear off that triple coating of selfishness and wilfulness and worldliness wherein they are encased, so long as they continue in their natural state,—the word will not enter into your hearts. If you puff out your imaginations,—if you continue to feed them with that which swells them out and bloats them,—if you do not bring them down to a sparer and wholesomer diet,—the word of God itself will only pamper your idle conceits. Yes, brethren, you must work along with us. All of you, every single one of you, is called to do so, to work along with us, your ministers, in preparing the way of the Lord, in making straight a highway for our God. To this glorious ministry, to this holy priesthood, you have all a vocation. And the field in which you are to exercise this vocation, with you, as with us, is twofold. There is one field within you, and another in the world without you: we have to work in both these fields; and so have you. The only difference is, that we are more especially and solemnly bound to devote the whole outward activity of our lives to labouring in the field of the world around us, with a direct view to the preparing of God's way in it; whereas the main part of your occupations relates to increasing the powers of the world, and maintaining its progress, and establishing and upholding its order. But in the inward field, the field of our own hearts and souls and minds, both of us, you and we, we and you, are bound to labour continually in preparing the way of the Lord: and if we neglect this portion of our work, whatever we may attempt to do in the outward

field, even though we should toil in it from morning to night, will be futile and unprofitable.

Some of you indeed may not improbably think, that, even though the rest of the text may be applicable to you, no less than to the persons to whom it was immediately addrest, still there is one expression in it, and one which in no slight degree modifies the meaning of the whole, in which you cannot be concerned. *For how can we*, you may say to yourselves, *be called to prepare the way of the Lord in a desert? we who are dwelling in a rich, civilized, orderly town, a town memorable for many centuries in history,—we who have been baptized into the Church of Christ,—we who have been trained from our infancy in the knowledge of God,—we who are wont to gather together in His house for His worship,—what can we, who enjoy all these advantages, all these blessings, have to do with labouring in a desert? And inasmuch as we are not in a desert, our work must be far less arduous, far less laborious, than that of making a highway in such a wild region: we can only have to keep the ways around us, which were made by our ancestors long ago, in repair; and this may easily be done by working now and then, when we have nothing more profitable or important in hand.* Now I am far from intending to undervalue any of these advantages, any of these blessings, as you rightly deem them, all of which, unless they are abused, may be great, and some of which are beyond all price. Nevertheless a seeming paradox, which is frequently coming across us in the course of our Christian contemplations, holds true most certainly in this matter also: for if we have no feeling of our being in a desert, this is the surest proof of our being for the present utterly bewildered in it. This seems a paradox;

but it is not one: for it amounts to no more than this, that a man totally blind may possibly be unconscious of his blindness, but a man partially blind cannot. If you conceive that you cannot be living in a desert, because you are living in a rich and well-ordered town, with all the means and garniture of comfort and luxury, this would only prove that you know not what a moral desert is. Even the Epicurean sceptic found out, that "To sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood or fell, To climb the trackless mountain all unseen, is not solitude;" but that the true, dismal, forlorn solitude is "Amid the crowd, the hum, the shock of men, To hear, to see, to feel, and to possess, With none who bless us, none whom we can bless." And surely the temples of Baal, the temples of Moloch, the temples of Ashtaroth were deserts, notwithstanding their thronging worshipers, notwithstanding the grandeur of their architecture and the splendour of their adornment. Or what would you say of Pandemonium? Our great poet has represented that, "Not Babylon, Nor great Alcairo its magnificence Equaled in all their glories;" and that "the airy crowd Swarmed and were straitened" in it. Yet every spirit in that thick, straitened crowd was alone: the solitude, the barrenness, the forlornness, the desolation of hell was around and in every spirit in all that ghastly swarm. For why? God was afar from them: and he who is afar from God must ever be in a desert, even though he dwell amid the splendour and the pressing throng of Pandemonium. And as God was afar from them, so was love, the only bond of union; while every spirit was filled with hatred and fierceness and cruelty and covetousness and lust and jealousy and envy, and whatever splits and rends and shivers the divine unity

of the universe. In like manner we too, my brethren, whatever our condition and situation, whatever our occupation may be, insomuch as we are afar from God, are in a desert, whether we know it or not. By nature we are all entirely so, and know nothing of it. In proportion as we are brought to a knowledge of God, of His surpassing Holiness, and of His infinite Love, and how that Holiness is no less essential than that Love to His eternal Unity, we feel more and more vividly how that portion of us which lingers afar from God, amid the toils of the world and the snares of sin, is in a desert; we discern that this is the Eden, from which we were banisht by the Fall, the presence of God; and that, only so far as every portion of our nature has been sown with the seed of the Word, and as that seed is springing up in it, can we escape out of that wilderness, and return back to the Paradise for which we were created.

Yet at all events we who have been baptized into the Church of Christ, we who have been bred up in the admonition of the Lord, we who are wont to gather together in His house, cannot possibly be in a desert. In one sense, it is very true, you cannot. So far as depends upon God, you are not: for He has brought you out of it: He has placed you in the rich and beauteous garden of His Church. But, inasmuch as it depends in great measure on ourselves where we are,—inasmuch as our circumstances are mainly what we make them and deem them to be,—so that a heart which brought the passions of hell into heaven, would be haunted, even in the courts of heaven, by the fears and pangs and black horrour of hell,—it has ever happened that, even within the pale of Christ's Church, wide regions have lain waste, deserts have spread themselves out, and

in the most fruitful fields many a spot has been bare. After the Israelites had been redeemed out of their Egyptian bondage, and had past through the baptism of the Red Sea, they had still to abide many years in the wilderness before they could reach the Promist Land: and after they did reach it, how many desert places do we come to in their history, deserts which seem to have become more and more destitute of all foodful grain, while the weeds in them became ranker and more luxuriant! This too is only a type of the history of the Church, a history which is continually acted over again, with greater or less variations, in every individual soul. Yes, my brethren, undoubtedly God has brought you out of that dismal desert wherein you were born; He brought you out of it, when He planted you in the garden of His Church: but you have brought large expanses of that desert along with you into His Church; you have brought them in your own hearts. All your feelings, which are afar from God, belong to the desert: all your thoughts, which are alien from God, belong to the desert: and in this desert you are called to prepare a highway, in order that God may pass over it.

Here we are met by the question, how is the way of the Lord to be prepared? The text commands us to prepare it: does it throw any light on the manner in which this work is to be accomplisht? Yes; there is one expression in the text, from which we may learn the specific character of our task: for we are commanded to *make straight* in the desert a highway for our God. Hence we may perceive that, as the desert in which we are called to prepare this way is a moral desert, so is the way itself to be a way of moral straightness: in other words, it is

the way of righteousness. The desert is not straight. It is full of ups and downs, of rugged mounds and steep precipices, of pits and chasms; and all these are to be made straight. Thus, you will remember, is our task set forth in the verse which follows the text. *Every valley is to be exalted, and every mountain and hill to be made low; the crooked is to be made straight, and the rough places plain.* This description is well known to represent the labours incumbent upon the pioneers who preceded the march of an Eastern king. As armies in those ages and countries had often to pass through wild and pathless regions, the pioneers went before to prepare a way for them, by filling up hollows, and leveling mounds, and cutting down woods and thickets. We too in these days are still better able to realize this description, seeing that so large a portion of the wealth and strength of England has been expended for some years past in this very work of making highways straight, by exalting the vallies, and laying the hills low, and making the crooked straight, and the rough plain. Accordingly, if we were more careful in seeking the spiritual purpose and meaning of the temporal gifts with which we are so richly supplied, we should regard these highways as types of the way which we have to prepare and make straight for God in our own hearts, and in the hearts of all mankind. For here too every valley is to be exalted; every base and groveling feeling is to be lifted up: every mountain and hill must be made low; every proud and lofty and swelling imagination, and whatsoever raises itself up against God, must be cast down: whatsoever is crooked, all the paths of cunning and falsehood and fraud, whatever swerves from truth and honesty to the right hand or to the left, must be made straight;

and the rough places, the stubbornness of our will, and all unkindness and hatred and malice and envy and jealousy, must be made plain, and smoothed down to that evenness and gentleness and sweetness, which becomes the followers of Christ.

Such, my brethren, is the work which is enjoined upon us, when we are commanded by the prophet to make straight a highway for our God. In this manner had the holy Baptist prepared a way for the Saviour in his own heart; and in this manner did he endeavour to prepare it in the hearts of his countrymen. We know how all base fears had been banisht from his soul, and how boldly he lifted up his voice to rebuke sin, under whatever form it confronted him. We know with what humility he shrank from the honour forced upon him by the Saviour, and how willingly and joyfully he decreast, in order that Christ should increase. We know the lessons of kindness which he inculcated on the rude soldiers. We know how he eschewed all crooked paths, how straightforwardly he bore witness of the truth. We know too how God did pass along the way which had been thus diligently prepared for Him, and gave His servant the power to continue faithful unto death, and to glorify Him thereby. So that in this example we may find an additional assurance of what our own reward will be, how glorious, how blessed, if we also labour diligently like the Baptist in preparing the way of the Lord.

In other words, the command imposed on us in the text is a summing up and concentration of the Law. For this was the great end and aim of the Law, to prepare and make straight a highway for the Lord in the midst of that desert, with which the heart of man, since his fall from Paradise,

had been overspread. Thus in this respect also was the Law a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ: it commanded us to make straight a highway in our hearts, in order that God might pass over it. But does not the prophet's command then enjoin far more than man can possibly accomplish? Yes, brethren, even as the Law does. Every one of God's commandments enjoins more than man, in his native state of infirmity, can accomplish: nay, many of them enjoin far more than man, when he first hears them, can even understand or conceive. An infant will stretch out its little hand to lay hold on the stars: the uneducated fancy they are stuck in the blue vault, a few miles off over their heads: and only by the researches of science carried on for century after century have we been enabled to discover their enormous distance, and that each little speck of light is a world. So it is with God's Law. Some of its commandments are within the reach of all: there are some, that all may keep; and by keeping them we find out how many there are that we have not kept, and cannot keep: the further too we advance in any part of it, the further the horizon recedes before us. Every one can at all events make straight the path before his own door. He may lift up some of his baser thoughts, or at least lift up his heart from them to something loftier and more ennobling: he may humble some of his prouder and vainer thoughts, by fixing his mind steadily on that which is blameworthy, rather than that which may be comparatively praiseworthy in his conduct, on that which is weak and frail and faulty in his nature: he may straighten some of the crookednesses in his life, and smoothen some of its roughnesses. He may keep from falsehood, from deceit, from vainboasting, from gross self-indulgence, from cruelty, from violence, of language

as well as of action. And when the dawn has once begun in a man's soul, every succeeding moment ought to be lighter than the preceding, and indeed will be so according to the order of nature, unless we forcibly shut out the light, seeing that the light does not issue from ourselves, but descends upon us from above. If indeed the command that we are to make straight our ways, had come from a human lawgiver, meditating on the idea of what ought to be, without due consideration of what can and may be, we might have been utterly incapable of obeying it: but God's commandments necessarily imply that they may be fulfilled, that is, partially,—at first poorly and feebly, but by degrees better, and still better. For God's word is a living word, and breathes strength into him who receives it willingly, even as in the vision of the prophet the spirit of the living creature is in the wheels, and whithersoever the living creatures go, the wheels go, because the spirit moves the wheels.

Moreover, as the first motions toward this our work of making straight a highway for our God, flow from God,—and indeed must do so, since without His express command we could never have dreamt that we could be employed in so glorious and blessed a task,—so do we find the most powerful of all encouragements in the assurance conveyed to us by the text, that, if we do prepare the highway, God will pass over it. That assurance is confirmed by the evidence of history. God did bring His people back through the wilderness from Babylon to Zion. When the Baptist had gone before Him to prepare His way, the Son of God did come, bringing us redemption and salvation, victory over all our enemies, and an inheritance of everlasting glory. In like manner, during the eighteen

centuries since, whenever a man has seriously endeavoured to make straight a highway for the Lord in his heart, God has come to him; nor has there ever been a single instance in which His promise has failed. Sooner would the sun have failed to rise, or the earth to roll round in her daily course. It may indeed be alledged, that there have been men who have attained to a considerable pitch of moral excellence, and who yet do not seem to have been visited by the Spirit of grace. Such men however, if we could search their hearts, we should find, have not been employed in preparing a way for the Lord: they have only been labouring to make straight a highway for themselves, for their own will and ambition, for their own glory and renown; and they have had their reward. On the other hand we may assert, with the most unhesitating confidence, that no man has ever made straight a highway for the Lord, but God has come to him, and walkt along that highway. Nay more; not a single earnest effort to prepare such a way has ever failed of obtaining a blessing from on high. He who prompted that effort in the first instance, has come to His obedient servant, and prompted him to still higher exertions. Of this you may feel thoroughly assured, brethren: no earnest effort in God's service has ever gone without its reward. If, giving heed to the motions of His Spirit, you bring forth thirtyfold, He comes to you, and calls on you, and helps you to bring forth sixtyfold. If you bring forth sixtyfold, He will help you to bring forth a hundredfold. There must be those among you who can avouch the truth of this from their own experience. Many of you, I would fain hope and trust, must be able to discern, when you look back on your past lives, how blessed the result has ever been when you have indeed

laboured diligently in preparing the way of the Lord. O may you all be enabled to taste this blessedness! May you all be stirred to look upon this as the great business of your lives, to prepare a way for the Lord, and to make straight in the desert a highway for your God! And then, when God does pass along the highway that has been prepared for Him, the wilderness and the solitary place will be glad, and the desert will rejoice and blossom like the rose.

This, brethren, is one of the modes in which every Christian is bound to obey the commandment in the text, by preparing the way of the Lord in his own heart. But there is also another mode of fulfilling it, as was observed above, by preparing the way of the Lord in the hearts of our brethren: and the occasion which has brought us together this day, will not allow me to conclude without saying a few words on this head also. For this too is a duty incumbent upon every Christian. Certain portions of it do indeed belong more especially to us who are ordained to the ministry of reconciliation: but every one who has any part in Christ, should deem that he too is called to bear his share in this great and glorious duty. As a member of Christ, he should take part in this, Christ's great work. And what a work is it to be employed on! a work of faith, a work of compassion, a work of mercy, a work of love, a work by which souls are to be saved, by which Satan is to be cast out, and the Kingdom of Christ is to be spread over the earth. Here, we know too well, there is no lack of deserts through which to prepare the way of the Lord. Without reckoning the dismal deserts which are still to be found in every part of every Christian land, look at any map of the world,

and you will see how large a portion of it is an utter desert, not even bearing the name of Christ. The souls that are pining amid that desert are said to amount to six hundred millions, three fourths of the whole human race. This desert is covered with the most abject ignorance, with humanity scarcely emerging from, or sinking back into the nature of the beasts that perish, with every imaginable form of sin, with the smouldering ashes of an extinct civilization, with the lees and dregs of earthly grandeur and beauty, with many rank, putrid hotbeds of crime, with thick masses of gaudy and poisonous weeds. Everything may be found in it except the way of the Lord, and those graces which only spring up by the side of that way. Here then is abundance of work before us, — work to which we are stimulated by the blessed results sure to arise from it,—work to which England is especially called, and for which she is markt out from all nations. For assuredly it is the special calling of England to prepare a way for the Lord over the earth. Or to what end are we gifted with our enormous, unexampled wealth? to what end are we gifted with our universal empire? to what end are we blest with a Church, which, while it is charged with the pure lamp of evangelical truth, at the same time, by retaining its ancestral constitution, is enabled to spread its arms on every side through all lands without impairing its unity? To what end have all those newly discovered mechanical powers been committed to us, by which the old tight-pressing bonds of time and space, whereby man had been shackled for so many ages, have suddenly been stretcht and expanded, so that what was far off is brought near, what was unknown is become well known? To what end, I ask, are we entrusted with all these great

and wonderful gifts? Is it in order that the wealth of England, and the power of England, and the intellect of England, should be consumed in preparing a way for Mammon, and making straight a highway for Belial and for Ashtaroth? God forbid! Let England do her duty: let her work, according to the mighty means committed to her, in preparing a way for the Lord, and casting across the wide ocean a highway for our God.

In this work it behoves us all, the highest and the lowest, the poorest as well as the richest, to take part. I have been speaking of the mechanical wonders which have come to light of late years; but these are not the only wonders wrought of late years. Had they been so, had there been no evidence of a diviner power stirring amongst us, it might have been a question whether they should not rank among the wonders of Pandemonium: and assuredly, if we do not sanctify them, if we do not consecrate them to the service of God, if we employ them solely in the service of Mammon and of Belial and of Ashtaroth,—as the means of increasing those huge piles of wealth, which are already toppling over from their unnatural highth, and threatening to spread devastation around,—or in pampering our morbid and ravenous luxury, our restless self-indulgence, our frivolous, superficial curiosity,—then these also will belong to that class of lying wonders, wherewith the spirits of evil are from time to time allowed to deceive such as desire to be deceived. But, like everything earthly, they may be wrested from Satan, and devoted to God. This is the purpose for which they were designed; and it lies with us,—I do not mean with us, who are here present, but with us and our fellowcountrymen, with the whole people of England,—to take care that

this purpose be accomplisht. We have much to atone for, numberless blessings to make return for. We have to atone for the disgraceful negligence of England during centuries; we have, many of us, to atone for our own negligence hitherto. Let the thought of our poor puny efforts during the past stir us up to redoubled energy for the future. And, as I said just now, other wonders have been shewn forth of late, beside those mechanical wonders which dazzle the children of this world, spiritual wonders, wonders which bear the mark that they come immediately from God. We are not left to the assurance of ancient prophecy, that, if we prepare a way for the Lord, He will pass over it: He may be seen passing along at this day. Whithersoever the eye turns, East or West or South, or if it pierce through to the Antipodes, wherever the preachers of the Gospel are making straight a highway for our God through the desert, our God may be seen passing along it. Conversions, which used to be rare, now take place by hundreds: tribes are flocking into the Church of Christ: the rudest savages are bowing down their humbled and softened hearts in adoring love before the name of the Redeemer.

At such a time, when God is doing so much, let not us, His poor servants, whom He has honoured with such a high calling, be wanting to His service. Let us do what we can in order to prepare His way. Make your offering to God this day with thankful hearts for calling you to this glorious work; and let your offerings be worthy of the work to which you are called. But I am not merely wishing to rouse you for the moment. I would not have your service in this great work a single fleeting impulse, like a falling star, glimmering for an instant, and then expiring

into rottenness. Let it shine steadily, constantly, as every heavenly impulse should, like the true stars in their unwearied course. Let it be a stedfast rule of your lives to keep in mind that you are called to prepare the way of the Lord in this manner also, as well as in your own hearts. You cannot do it in either effectually, unless you do it in both at once. Endeavour then to do it in both at once; and may you enjoy the twofold reward of seeing the Lord manifest Himself more and more clearly within your own souls, and more and more gloriously and mightily over the face of the earth! The way which we labour to prepare, shall then be *the way of holiness; and the redeemed of the Lord shall walk there; and the ransomed of the Lord shall come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads.*

THE PURPOSE OF MAN'S CREATION,

OR

THE WALK OF GOOD WORKS:

A SERMON PREACHT AT DUNCHURCH,

ON THURSDAY, SEPT. 7th, 1843,

AT THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHURCH-ASSOCIATION FOR THE RUGBY AND DUNCHURCH DEANERIES.

THE PURPOSE OF MAN'S CREATION,

OR

THE WALK OF GOOD WORKS.

EPHESIANS, ii. 10.

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

THIS is one of those pregnant verses, which we find so often in St Paul. It contains the germs of a whole system of theology, and, in its simple enunciation of divine truth, supplies us with a refutation of more than one noxious heresy, by which the Church of Christ has from time to time been troubled and divided. It sets forth the origin of our being, and its purpose, and teaches us how, and how alone, that purpose can be fulfilled. It declares the great threefold mystery, of our creation, of our redemption and regeneration, and of our sanctification.

We are God's workmanship. This is the first proposition conveyed in the text; and if we understand these words in that which would be their primary meaning, when they are taken by themselves, without reference to any special determination which that meaning may receive from the context, they express the great fundamental truth of all religion, the essential relation between man and God. *We are His workmanship.* This is the one main truth, the recognition of which severs Theism from Pantheism. It teaches us that there is a personal God, to whom we stand in the relation of creatures to a Creator. Think, brethren, for a moment, before we proceed, what an awful, what a

grand and ennobling revelation this is, to beings finding themselves placed on a wide never-ending floor, with a blue, spangled, ever-changing roof hanging beyond their reach over their heads, in the midst of multitudes of other beings, some of the same, many more of totally different kinds, coming they know not how or whence, going they know not whither, at one moment cherisht and ministered to by the elements, at another buffeted, overwhelmed, and crusht by them, haunted by a swarm of wants and appetites and cravings and desires, by dim, shadowy thoughts, and feelings that understand not their objects, and ever and anon seeing some of the beings of their own kind smitten, struck down, cut off, bereft of motion and strength, and mouldering away till they are mixt up with the mass of inanimate things, — what an awful and yet ennobling revelation must it have been to such beings, when a voice first sounded in their ears, and pierced to their hearts, saying, *Ye are God's workmanship! There is a God above you; and ye are His creatures, ye, and everything else that your eyes look upon. You are not the empty sport of chance: you did not sprout out of the ground, or drop from the sky: the winds did not waft you out of their caves; nor did the sunbeams draw you forth by their magical power out of any combination of the things around you: you are not mere shells or seaweeds left behind on the shores of this world by the receding waters of time. You, and all the other beings, and all the other things in the universe, are the workmanship of One Almighty, Allwise God.* For the declaration that we are God's workmanship cannot be narrowed to man exclusively. Although it may not of necessity imply that all other things were likewise made by the same power out of nothing, yet, if there be a Being so far above man,

as that the race of man is the work of His hands, it is plain that the same Being must at least exercise a supreme dominion over all other things, swaying and moulding and fashioning them according to His will, linkt as they are to mankind by innumerable all-embracing ties, and made to be subservient in so many ways to his various wants, physical, social, and political, and to his life itself. So that the assertion that we are God's workmanship must be nearly equivalent to that fuller account of the whole work of the Creation, which is revealed to us in the first chapter of Genesis.

What a change then must the recognition of this one truth have produced in every region of man's consciousness, in the whole frame and character of his heart and mind, in all his thoughts and feelings, whether directed toward himself, or toward the things and beings around him! I do not mean, that such a change can have been accomplisht in a single instant. According to the order of progression in this world, all transitions must be gradual. But it is one of the commonest processes of thought to sum up a series of consecutive acts, and to contemplate them only in their result, as though this were instantaneous. Indeed in a number of habitual acts, — as for instance in sight, hearing, speech,—we do this instinctively, in such a manner that it requires a subtile psychological analysis to resolve them into their component parts, and even to discover that they admit of resolution: and the application of this process to things, which to our microscopic organs appear far distant from each other, is sanctioned by the usage of the Scriptures, inasmuch as they utter the mind of Him before whom a thousand years are as one day. Thus the change wrought in man by the Gospel is

often spoken of as sudden and immediate; whereas the transition from the state of darkness to that of light is in most cases very gradual, and, unless it be so, is likelier to have been effected by a transient flash of lightning, than by the dayspring of the Sun of Righteousness. From the constitution of the human mind, it would be utterly impossible for any man to emerge at once from a condition of blind godlessness into an intelligent recognition of a Divine Maker. Still this is the cardinal point in the passage from savage ignorance to civility and culture, the recognition that we are not self-sprung, that we are not the offspring of the earth, nor of the elements, nor of chance, but the creatures of an overruling Mind, the workmanship of a God. For consider what this recognition implies. It implies that the condition of the universe, and of man in the universe, is not a condition of chaotic turbulence and capricious wilfulness, but of law and of order. It implies that there must be some bond whereby we are united to other beings of our own kind,—that,—to adopt the image to which the race of men was compared by the ancient poet, — we are not like fallen leaves, drifting along confusedly before every casual breeze, but like living leaves, that grow from the same stem, and form part of the same tree. It implies too, that there must also be some bond of union, some connexion and interdependence, nearer or more remote, between us and all other creatures, however different and even discrepant in appearance; inasmuch as all are the workmanship of the same God, and must therefore bear the stamp of the same Almighty Will; which, being One with a perfect unity, far beyond our conception, must at least cast a shadow of this unity on the Creation, wherein it has manifested itself.

Moreover, seeing that every work of an intelligent will is made to answer some purpose, which purpose will become more refined and profound and vast and complicated in proportion to the degree of intelligence wherewith that will is endowed, the declaration that we are God's workmanship further involves, that we must have a purpose to accomplish, an end for which we were made.

Hence this declaration puts us in the way of gaining an answer to another of the great questions which must needs puzzle and agitate every mind, as soon as it begins to meditate on itself, and perceives on the one hand that it has a certain power of regulating its own conduct, of determining its actions, of doing or not doing, of pursuing or refraining,—while on the other hand every act is felt to be a link in a chain, and to bring on a train of consequences, stretching illimitably along, and fraught oftentimes with weal or woe to the agent. The declaration that we are God's workmanship, not only reveals to us whence we came, and how we became what we are: it will also guide us to an answer to the question, *Why are we here?* Without the light shed by this declaration, that question merely quickens our intellect to discern the thick mass of clouds spread round about us. For if we put it to the outward inanimate world, that is silent, and tells us nothing of man. If we put it to our own consciousness, that may give us a multitude of varying, and almost contradictory answers, according to the momentary predominance of some one impulse or feeling or thought. When we look at the other objects in the natural world, we perceive that each has a path markt out for it, a course set before it, a law inwrought into it, and therefore overruling it. But when our eyes wander searchingly among the generations of mankind, to

discover the purpose and end of man's being, according to the idea of his nature, as realized in his actual condition,—the purpose and end for which he is what he is, and where he is,—then the definite becomes indefinite, the fixt vague, the simple infinitely entangled, the regular and orderly irregular and disorderly; and instead of a plain determinate law, we see little but indications of lawless will, and passion, and appetite, and chance, and caprice. Hence it became one of the favorite enquiries with the philosophers of antiquity, what is the end and purpose of man's being, the end and purpose which it behoves man to set before him. The importance of this enquiry excited their deepest interest: its perplexities sharpened their curiosity, and stimulated their ingenuity: but in investigating it they were led astray more or less by following the bias of their own minds, under the influences of their accidental position in the world; and thus they came to various and often very discordant conclusions, because they drew their arguments mainly from the examination of what man is in himself, or rather from what he appeared to them, when modified by all the circumstances of his age and country, without sufficient reference to his relation to his Divine Maker; without which reference all our knowledge of man must needs be fragmentary and very imperfect, even as our knowledge of a building, say of a church or cathedral, would be, unless we took into account that it is the work of a human architect, and that all its aisles and columns, its shafts and windows, were meant to be the expression of human thoughts, the symbols of human feelings, and to minister to human worship. But when we bear in mind that man is God's workmanship,—that he is so, not merely in his individual character, but also as a member of a race,

with all his relations, whether springing from his affections and desires, or from the wants of his nature, to the other members of that race, — that he is so moreover as a member of the whole created universe, occupying his peculiar station among all the other parts of the universe, not insulatedly, but so as to be connected therewith by innumerable fibres stretching to and fro, the bursting of which is tantamount to the destruction of life itself,—then we may plainly infer that the purpose for which man was created, is not a purpose which he was to set himself, of which he himself was to be the arbitrary author and absolute lawgiver, but a purpose which his Maker set him, and for the accomplishment of which his Maker made him such as he is, and endowed him with all his faculties and capacities. Hence, as the Will of God is One, and there cannot but be a harmony and consistency and unity pervading His manifold purposes, it follows that the purpose for which man was created, must in some measure harmonize and correspond with those purposes of his Maker, the marks of which we discern in the rest of the creation.

Thus the knowledge that we are God's workmanship must be a material help to us in our endeavours to ascertain the purpose of our being. What then, if we make use of the criterion hereby afforded to us, independently of any more positive revelation, shall we find that purpose to be? I know not in what plainer words to express it, than in those of the text: *we are God's workmanship, created unto good works.* The more we know of the creation, the larger survey we take of all the orders of created things, the deeper insight we gain into them, and into their mutual relations and modes of operation, the more convincingly do we perceive that God has willed to manifest

His own infinite Goodness in every part of the universe, and in this respect above all, that He has made all the members of it work together, not solely or mainly for their own good, but equally and coordinately for the good of each other. Hereby He has stampt the image of His own Goodness on all orders of creatures. He said to them, *Ye shall bear witness of your Maker in this, that ye shall all work together for good,*—for the good of the whole, and of every part; even as all the members of the body work together for the good of the whole, and each for the good of every other member, in which its own good is concluded, and without which its own good must suffer diminution. Now this purpose, we readily see, is abundantly fulfilled by all inanimate things, which, having no individuality, no self to minister to, seem to exist and to work after their kinds entirely for the benefit of others,—by the earth and the sun, by the revolution of the seasons, by the rain and the dew, by the light and the darkness, by the winds and the waters, by fire and ice, by the grass and corn, by herbs and trees. In brute animals also, in their conformation and distribution, their habits and their relations, more especially to man, we may detect sufficiently clear traces of the same overruling purpose. But when we come to man, when we view him in his natural state, at whatever stage of it, from the infant rudeness of blind ignorance down to the expiring torpour of an effete refinement, one of the very last things we should dream of saying of him, is, that he was *created unto good works.* If we ask ourselves, our own unregenerate and unenlightened consciousness, for what purpose we were created, one of the very last answers that we should obtain to such a question, would be, that we were *created unto good works.* In the

lower stages of savage life a man might answer, that he was created to eat and to drink, to beget children, to fight, to kill, and to die. With the progress of civilization other appetites and passions and desires come forward more prominently, and demand to be gratified. Men grow to deem that they were made to rule over the earth, to rule over their brethren, to heap up riches, to heap up power, to heap up knowledge,—that these are the noblest objects set before the noblest members of their kind, and that the rest exist for little else save that these pinnacles and spires should stand upon them and rise out of them. In the highest and purest state of the natural speculative mind, as exemplified in the wisest and best among the philosophers of antiquity, man did indeed advance so far as to discover that he was made to shew forth a certain class of virtues, those which imply strength, energy, courage, those which shine in the eyes of the world, those by which fame and glory are to be won, and mainly for this very reason, in order to win fame and glory. But in every view which the natural man has formed of the purpose of his being, even in the highest and purest, his eye has been fixt upon self as the centre of the picture, rising too almost like a pyramid out of a sandy flat. That which he is to do, he is to do for his own happiness, for his own glory, for the dignifying and ennobling of his own being. There is hardly any reference to the happiness and benefit of others, hardly any to that divine purity, which is ordained to be the bond of likeness and union between man and God: thus there is hardly any mention of what the Scriptures especially designate by the name of *good works*. According to all heathen philosophy man is his own end and aim. As it had never attained to a full perception of

the great primary truth, that *we are God's workmanship*, it could never deduce the inference, which we have seen to flow from that truth, that we are *created unto good works.*

And if, even in the highest flights of speculation, man was unable to look so far beyond the narrow horizon wherewith the spirit of self had fenced him in, much more, we may be sure, would he fail to realize this great purpose of his being in his practical conduct. Nay, the very last sight we must expect to meet with in any province of the heathen world, is a man living under the practical conviction that he was created unto good works. On the contrary, if we might allowably infer from the actual lives of men for what purpose they were created,— if, as from beholding the operation of the sun we conclude that he was made to give light and warmth, and from the operation of the earth that she was made to bring forth food for the creatures that dwell on her face, or at all events that these are among the foremost purposes for which the sun and the earth were created,—if, I say, we were in like manner to argue that the fruits which men bring forth must also be after their kind, and should therefore assume that we have in this manner got a clue to the purpose for which man was made,—surely the conclusion to which all the records of the heathen world would lead us, would rather be that mankind were created for evil works, than for good. Under the poisonous contagion of selfishness, exaggerating and bloating whatever relates to ourselves, and shrivelling and withering what relates to others, men's feelings became passions, their wants became appetites, their desires became lusts; and none of these could be gratified, could gain that which they craved as essential to their

gratification, without more or less of injury to their neighbours. Thus every man's fist was clencht against every man; and every man's heart was whetted against every man: and though the instincts of natural affection, and friendship, and the bonds of society, and the obligations of law, and patriotism, checkt the universal devastation and desolation, which such a state of things would otherwise have produced, still, beyond the charmed circle over which these feelings extended their influence, strangers, as the very languages implied, were accounted enemies, who were to be eyed with jealous fear, and might be maltreated without any breach of duty. So far too were men from recognizing that their relation to their Divine Maker imposed any obligation to good works upon them, that they invested the beings whom they worshipt as gods with their own evil feelings and appetites, and made them live accordingly, not in good works, but in evil works, in the unrestrained indulgence of every carnal and spiritual lust.

Consequently we seem to have found a purpose of God with regard to mankind, which man thwarted and totally baffled. Man, we were led to conclude, was created by God unto good works: yet evidence which cannot be controverted or questioned, proves that, wherever he has been found, in every region of the earth, in every age and sex, in every state of society, in every class and rank, he has lived much rather in evil works. Nay, without ascending into that sphere of thought, where the very best works which man can perform are discerned to be frail and faulty, — that sphere of divine truth, where the heavens are seen to be impure, and the angels not exempt from imperfection,—even according to the conceptions of human morality, we may say, that man, who was created unto good

works, is proved by the testimony of all history and all experience, to have lived, so long as he continued in his natural state, almost entirely in evil works, or at best in works, which, if not plainly and grossly evil, had no claim to the title of good. Now can we suppose that God would allow His Almighty Will to be thus frustrated? Surely this cannot be. Were a man to stand in the path of the earth, and to stretch out his arm to thrust it back, he would either be crusht, or whirled along by its sweeping force: in like manner that which opposes itself against God, must either be dasht to destruction, or borne along upon the wings of His Will. If man, who was created by God unto good works, would only walk in evil works, what sentence could we look for? except, *Cut him down: why should he cumber the innocent, fruitbearing ground? why should the darkness of his sins rise up in the face of the pure, lightgiving sun? Man, who gives himself up to evil works, shall not be the lord of a world which was made to bring forth good works.* Surely, brethren, when we reflect on this awful perversion and audacious resistance, we may expect to hear the voice of doom, *I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth; for it repenteth Me that I have made him.* Supposing therefore that the words we have hitherto been considering stood alone, — were there nothing further in the text, than that *we are God's workmanship created unto good works*,—even while we recognized and blest the glorious purpose for which God made man, we should be forced to confess that these very words, in declaring that purpose, do also pronounce a most righteous sentence of condemnation against us. For if we are God's workmanship created unto good works,— seeing that God's workmanship must needs be perfect after

its kind, and thoroughly adapted for effecting His purpose, —it would be plain that, when we issued from the hand of our Maker, we must have been amply fitted out with the powers and faculties needful for our living in good works: and yet where are those powers and faculties now? what has become of them? how have we marred them? how have we stifled them? whither have we cast them from us? In the natural man they are nowhere to be found. In the whole heathen world we cannot find anything more than, here and there, in rare instances, an image and likeness of them much maimed and defaced; whereas their opposites, the powers and dispositions which manifest themselves in evil works, are to be found in throngs and hordes. It is much as though the sun had turned into a volcano, and were pouring forth volumes of lurid smoke instead of light. Therefore the declaration which we have hitherto been examining, if it stood alone, would only give us a distant glimpse of the glory for which we were created, and by this contrast awaken a more painful consciousness of the darkness and shame in which we are living, without opening a prospect of any way whereby we may escape from that dark shame, and enter into the inheritance of glory, for which we were originally designed. But, blessed be God! the words which we have hitherto been considering do not stand alone in the text. St Paul is not calling on the Ephesians to mourn over the greatness which they had lost, ages before they came into the world, but to rejoice and stand fast in that which had just been obtained for them, and of which they were chosen to partake. His declaration is not, that we are God's workmanship created in the beginning unto good works, but that *we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works.* So

that the words do not refer to the glory of our original creation in Paradise, which glory was forfeited irretrievably at the Fall, and which the natural man was incapable of even wishing to recover: they refer to the glory of our new creation in Christ, in whom and through whom the curse of feebleness and barrenness, after clinging to the whole race of man ever since the Fall, was repealed; and in whom we are indeed created anew unto good works, being endowed by His Spirit with all the strength needful for performing them, provided we seek it earnestly and perseveringly in His prevailing name (AG). It might be urged indeed, that in the beginning likewise were we created unto good works in Christ Jesus; for that the Scriptures declare that by Him God *made the worlds*, and *by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible*, and *without Him was not anything made that was made.* But when we look at the whole bent of the argument in the midst of which the text occurs, it is plain that the creation spoken of is not the original quickening at the beginning of the world, but the regenerative *quickening* of those *who were dead in trespasses and sins*, and whom, when they *were dead in sins*, God *quickened together with Christ.* Hereby the words of the text, which, if they stood alone, would come upon us with a dismal sound of lost strength and forfeit glory, are rich in comfort, since they tell us of what we may become, if we will strive in faith to follow Him, who came down from heaven for this very end, that we might be created anew unto good works, and might indeed walk in the way foreordained by God for us to walk in.

This is a truth which it is of the deepest importance that we should clearly and rightly understand. We must

be brought to confess, not in word and in thought merely, but in feeling and in life, that we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works. It is not enough for us to acknowledge that we were created in the beginning unto good works. For although this, as we have seen, is thoroughly true, it is a truth the knowledge of which will not profit us, unless we at the same time recognize how entirely we had withstood and frustrated God's purpose in our original creation; how the blast of sin had past over us, and had blighted our whole moral nature, so that we were become utterly incapable of bringing forth those good works, which God had ordained us to bring forth; how for this very reason it was necessary that, if the barrenness and deadness, with which we had smitten ourselves, were to be healed, we should be created anew; and how the Son of God therefore descended from heaven purposely in order that we might be grafted into Him, and by receiving His life into us might be enabled to bring forth, what we could not bring forth from the stock of our degenerate nature. This, I say, is a truth which it is of the utmost importance that we should keep constantly in mind: for we are very apt to forget it: even those who readily confess it with their lips, and would shrink from the thought of denying it, are sadly prone to lose sight of it and disregard it in their habitual feelings and resolutions. Very few are so entirely freed from the guileful spirit of pride, as to feel an abiding conviction that they are incapable of performing any good works of themselves, by their own strength, except so far as that strength has been renewed, and is continually replenisht, by the higher life which flows into us from our new creation in Christ Jesus, and from our constant

communion with Him. Even they who are living in evil works, in sloth, in luxury, in self-indulgence, would fain persuade themselves and others, that, if they chose, they could turn forthwith by an act of their own will from their evil works to good. In fact this is one of the delusions whereby the Tempter keeps us from seeking and gaining that real strength, which can only be ours so far as we live by the power of the life infused into us at our new creation. Surely the words of the text imply this: for, if we had been anywise capable of performing good works of ourselves, it would not have been requisite that we should be created anew, in order that we might perform them: nor would the Son of God have descended from heaven, in order that we might be created in Him for that purpose, if any power acting upon our will from without, by exhortation or admonition or intimidation, could have availed to make us fulfill it.

Again, we are created anew in Christ Jesus *unto good works*, not *by good works*. Good works are the end of our new creation, not the means of it. This too is a truth which needs to be graven livingly on our hearts. We cannot gain any share in Christ Jesus by any good works of our own, as our pride would gladly believe. We cannot create ourselves anew in Him: we cannot graft ourselves into Him, any more than the branch of a fruit-tree can graft itself into a new stock. We must be created in Him, we must be grafted into Him, not by our own act, but by the power and grace of God: then alone shall we have ability given to us to bring forth good works. The grace of God alone is the efficient power whereby we are to be grafted into Christ Jesus, and created anew in Him. And what must there be in ourselves, whereby we may receive

that grace? *Good works?* Surely not, brethren: good works are the end for which we are thus grafted and created anew, the fruit which, when the operation is completed, we are to bring forth: but a gardener will not think of grafting fruit into a new stock. If we are grafted into Christ, if we are created anew in Him, it must be through faith. This great truth, that our new creation in Christ Jesus is an act of pure grace, and can only be received through faith, is urged with earnest repetition by the Apostle in the verses which precede the text. *God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ,—by grace ye are saved,—and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved, through faith,— and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,—not through works, lest any man should boast.* By faith we take hold of whatever exercises a strong influence over us in this world: faith is the channel of union between our souls and whatever acts upon them: and it is only when our faith is strengthened by the operation of the Spirit, that we can take such firm hold on Christ as to be grafted into Him: only through faith can we become members of the new creation, inmates of the world of faith: only through faith can we pass out of the world of sense and of the carnal mind, into the world where the spirit dwells in communion with Christ in God.

Thus the text warns us against that delusive errour, to which the pride of our nature renders us so prone, that by our own strength we are to make ourselves what

we ought to be,—that through our own good works we are to be created anew. Indeed the very word *created* is a complete refutation of that errour; not only because it implies that we must be created by some other being, inasmuch as the expression *self-created* would contain a contradiction; but also because the being *created* anew involves a very different change from any that our own actions, whatever they may be, could effect in us. For although habit is not unreasonably said to be a second nature,—in other words, though a series of acts, which we are accustomed to go through frequently and in regular sequence, will in time become so familiar that we go through them almost instinctively, — and though all our actions do in some sense modify our hearts and minds and wills, and leave a sediment behind them, whether for good or for evil,—yet the only case in which a habit can produce any powerful effect on the character, is where it is constant and unvarying: else opposite habits will check and counteract each other. That is to say, our nature must already have been so totally transformed as to bring forth good works in abundance, before it can do anything in the way of bringing forth those good works, which alone would be able to transform it.

On the other hand the text is no less conclusive in refuting an opposite errour, to which, through the slothfulness of their nature, many have too readily given ear. For it declares that *we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.* As these words should convince us that we cannot be created effectually unto good works, except in Christ Jesus, so do they likewise prove that we cannot be really created in Christ Jesus, unless we manifest this our new creation, by shewing forth its effect in good works.

There is no passage which more clearly explains the whole relation of good works to the Christian life. We cannot perform any good works, unless we are created unto them in Christ Jesus; and hence that creation in Christ Jesus cannot be anywise the effect or consequence of our good works: *we were saved*, as the Apostle tells us, *by grace*, when we *were dead in trespasses and sins*. But if we are indeed created anew in Christ Jesus, our good works must follow, as a necessary, certain, irrepressible result. They are the only evidence of that creation to others; and they are no less indispensable to ourselves, to certify us of its reality. If we do not bring forth good works, we ought to be convinced that we cannot have been created anew in Christ Jesus, that in one way or other the process of our regeneration has been marred. Good works are the mark, the proof, the evidence of the Christian life: they are the badge of a Christian community: and they are the means through which the members of that community are bound together, and the Christian life is brought to pervade them all. When they are scanty, the Christian life must be feeble: when they are totally wanting, whether in an individual or a community, the Christian life must be all but extinct. They are the evidence of the Christian life; and they are also the means of growing in it: for it is by exercise, by action, that every living principle is strengthened. This is no way at variance with the assertion that the Christian life is not the effect of our good works. The primary creative cause is, in all instances except the highest, distinct from the secondary nutritive causes. The bread which feeds, will not beget a man. By study we do not acquire the power of knowing; but we improve and increase that power, and may

do so almost indefinitely. By practising any art,—be it music, or painting, or statuary,—we do not acquire that particular faculty of the mind, which fits a man for becoming a musician, or a painter, or a sculptor, any more than we acquire our eyes by seeing: indeed, if a man has not that faculty already within him, no teaching or practising will draw it out of him: but when he has it, practice will greatly sharpen and better it. Such too is the case with the Christian life. It is not created by our good works, but is to be fostered and nourisht by them, and may be so to a wonderful extent, if we always bear in mind how it originated, and are careful to have it replenisht from its only Source; while on the other hand without them it will pine and die. Indeed in this instance we have the special assurance, the truth of which extends to every field of human action, that *to him who hath shall be given; and from him who hath not shall be taken away even what he hath.*

Therefore have we the utmost reason for thankfulness to our heavenly Father, who in His infinite lovingkindness has prepared good works for His children to walk in, for all such as have become His children by being created in Christ Jesus unto good works; since without this new creation, and without the ordinance of good works, whereby we are to fulfill its purpose, we should have been left to follow the lusts of the flesh, and to do what seemed pleasant to our own self-idolizing hearts. Now what are these good works, which God has foreordained for us to walk in? From the contrast which St Paul draws in the former part of our chapter between the prior state of the Ephesians, when they were *dead in trespasses and sins, having their conversation in the lusts of the flesh, and fulfilling*

the desires of the flesh and the carnal mind,—and their state after they were *created in Christ Jesus unto good works*,—it is plain that these good works must be the direct opposites of the works in which they had previously walkt. In other words, they are the direct opposites to the works of those who fulfill the desires of the flesh and the carnal mind,—the works of those who mortify and crucify the flesh and the carnal mind,—works of purity and holiness, which are repeatedly urged upon the Ephesians in the latter part of this Epistle. These however are not all. In the description which St James gives of the pure and undefiled worship of God,—that is, of the good works wherein we are ordained to walk,—that worship is represented as consisting of two parts, the keeping oneself unspotted from the world, and the visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction. That is to say, there are two great classes of good works, those which relate to ourselves, and are connected with the right government of our own hearts and minds, and those which relate to our fellowcreatures, works of holiness, and works of love. In like manner, at the beginning of the fifth chapter of our Epistle, where St Paul is about to warn the Ephesians to shun the very mention of the impurities, in which, after the fashion of heathendom, they had been living, he urges the highest motive for doing so upon them, in that divine exhortation, *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an Offering and a Sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour*. In both these classes of good works indeed we are called upon to be followers of God, and to perfect that likeness of Him, which is restored to us when we are created anew in Christ Jesus: we are called to be holy

as He is holy, and to be merciful as He is merciful. In each too our eyes and our hearts should be constantly turned toward Him, who has so graciously prepared good works for us to walk in: we must seek our strength from His Spirit, our guidance from His law, our pattern from the life of His Son; and our end should be the glory of God, and the manifestation of that glory in the way in which He has especially chosen to manifest it, by pouring forth the riches of His goodness upon His creatures.

How surpassingly beautiful and glorious are the pictures which the Apostolic Epistles every now and then set before us, of the blessed graces which ought to adorn a Christian community! To a youthful imagination, which has not yet learnt how feeble the mightiest words are to contend with the rooted evil in the heart of man, it might seem that such a heavenly revelation, when set by the side of the darkness and misery and unutterable abominations in which the world was at that time wallowing, must have won mankind to cast away their hateful sins, and to strive with all their energies after the glory and blessedness in which they were invited to partake. Yet how far would such an imagination be from the truth! Near eighteen centuries have past away since this Epistle to the Ephesians was written; and what is the state of the world at this day? what is the state of the most favoured parts of it? What, to bring the question home, is the state of England? Does it resemble the apostolic picture of the pure and spotless Church, of the Church walking in love and good works? Or does it not rather resemble the picture of the heathen world, lying dead in trespasses and sins, having its conversation in the lusts of the flesh, and fulfilling the desires of the

flesh and the carnal mind? Surely, brethren, there is too much reason to fear that the works of darkness are more thickly strewn amongst us, than the works of light. In the heavens the stars may be so thick as to blend into the Milky Way; but where is the Milky Way upon earth? Can we hope that it will ever be found there? Yet why not? Are we no longer God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works? We cannot plead such an excuse in our palliation. The cause lies with ourselves. It is, that the children of light are still less wise in their generation than the children of darkness,—that they are not rightly diligent and earnest and unweariable in working the works of light,—that they do not go forth like bridegrooms from their chamber, and rejoice like giants to run their race,—that they do not let their light shine before men, so that their good works may be seen, revealing the glory of their Heavenly Father, who created them anew unto those works in Christ Jesus. Alas! there are hundreds of millions of human souls at this day, who are lying dead in trespasses and sins, in various parts of the earth: and what have we done for them? There are millions in England, who are in a like dismal state: and what have we done for them? When God looks down from heaven, and beholds all the misery, and all the sin, the ignorance, the falsehood, the strife, the uncleanness, the sensual and spiritual idolatries, which are still spread over almost every spot upon earth,—and when He sees how little His Church has done in eighteen centuries, how little, compared with the vast exigencies, it has been doing until now, to overcome and drive out all these evils, and to heal the unfortunate beings who are lying dead beneath them,—might He not justly

say? *I will take away My Church from the face of the earth: My Spirit shall no longer go down to strive vainly for the sanctification of mankind.* Might He not say of England, whom He has chosen above other countries, to manifest His truth in her? *I will take away My word from England; I will take away the knowledge of My truth from her; My Spirit shall no longer strive with a people, who give themselves up to the worship of Mammon.*

Again I would ask you, dear brethren, seeing that the darkness and misery and sinfulness of England, and of the world, is so vast and overwhelming, what have we done, any of us,—what have we done, each one of us,—to withstand and repell, to lessen and heal these terrible evils? Have we done nothing? Then how can we believe that we are the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works? We are not so: we cannot be so: the one proof of our being so is wanting in us: we were indeed called to be so; yea, and a beginning of this new life was infused into us, when we were first received into Christ's Church: but we have turned heedlessly away from that call; or, if we have given ear to it for a while, it was merely as to a pleasant song, for our amusement, and not for the building up of our souls. I would fain believe however that this is not the condition of any person who now hears me: indeed the very occasion of our solemn assembly this day here in the house of God is a kind of proof that you have been and are in some measure desirous of fulfilling the purpose of Him, who created us in Christ Jesus unto good works. You desire this in some measure; but in what measure? Seeing that God has done so much, that the Son of God has suffered so much, for the accomplishment of this our new creation unto good works, surely

we ought not to be content with a scanty measure of such works: we ought not to rest satisfied with giving the crumbs and remnants of our lives to this their main purpose and end. We should think what Christ endured for the sake of this our new creation; we should think what God has done and given for it; and we should make it the stedfast aim and main business of our lives to walk accordingly.

There is one, and only one sure way of remedying all the evils with which England is now opprest; there is one, and only one sure way of remedying all the evils spread over every part of the world; if they who prize their Christian calling would act consistently and constantly under the living conviction that they are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works,— and that therefore they must never waste their powers and means in fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the carnal mind,— but must walk in love, even as Christ loved us. Christ has called us to imitate His love, to fashion ourselves after its likeness. And what was that Love? Not a love which vented itself in words: not a love which contented itself with occasional acts of kindness: not a love which deemed it enough to give a small portion of its substance in works of charity now and then. The love with which Christ loved us, and which St Paul exhorts us to imitate, is the love wherewith He gave Himself for us an Offering and a sweet-smelling Sacrifice to God. It was by that portion of this selfdenying, selfsacrificing spirit, which was vouchsafed to the holy Apostles, and to their immediate followers, that they gathered the nations with such wonderful rapidity into the Church of the Lord. It was by that portion of this same spirit, which was granted

to the blessed Reformers, that they delivered the Church from its bondage, and purified it from its corruptions. And it is only by this same spirit, by the spirit of self-sacrifice for Christ's sake, by the endeavour to carry out the great purpose of our new creation in Christ Jesus, that we shall be enabled, with God's ever-ready help, to contend successfully against the terrific evils, which are threatening to destroy this nation, and to blot it out from the Book of Life, like the Cities of the Plain.

My brethren, coming amongst you as a stranger, without any local knowledge of the specific object which has brought you hither today, I have felt that it would not be appropriate for me to enter into any argument on the peculiar character and advantages of the Association which is this day celebrating its first Anniversary. It seemed to me more becoming the relation between us, that I should speak to you on the common Christian ground, of our all being God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. We are so individually; and we are so collectively: and this is one of the blessings attendant on our being incorporated into the Church of Christ, that we are called to work together in the good works which are the purpose of our new creation. Individually, amid the distractions of daily cares, and under the stress of daily business, we may often feel as though we had little power for any good works, beyond the sphere of our immediate neighbourhood: but collectively, as members of the Church, all may help, each according to his means, in furthering those good works of infinite range and compass, for the sake of which the Son of God became incarnate, and shed His blood on the Cross,—in furthering them over the whole earth; and to do this according to

our means thus becomes the duty of every one, and the privilege of every one. A great benefit of such associations is, that they bring this duty home to the mind and conscience of every member of the Church, and enable every member of the Church to exercise his grand Christian privilege of helping on the work of his Lord and Saviour over the whole earth. Therefore fulfill this duty, brethren, exercise this privilege, thankfully and joyfully, now and whenever an opportunity of doing so is vouchsafed to you. Be assured that this is one of the good works which God has ordained for you to walk in. But bear in mind at the same time that it is only one of those good works. We are too apt in these days to think money the chief, and almost the only gift, that we have to give to the service of God. This itself is one of Mammon's delusions: he makes his slaves believe that money is the lord of the earth, the one spring of all action, the one means of effecting every end: and for this very reason, in consequence of our inordinate estimate of the value of money, we give our money itself less largely than we otherwise should do. But Christ did not give money as the price of our Redemption: He gave Himself, His humiliation, His labours, His agony, His death. The Apostles gave themselves: they bore their lives in their hands, offering them up daily by walking in good works, and ready to offer them up, whenever they were called, by death. This, brethren, is what it behoves us also to do, seeing that we are exhorted to follow the glorious example of our blessed Master. We should give ourselves up soul and body for the sake of our Lord and of our brethren, by giving up all our sins, all our slothfulness, all our self-indulgence of whatsoever kind,—by living a pure and holy life, and

thus also letting the light of our heavenly Father's glory shine in the eyes of men, — by perseverance in every kind of welldoing, — and by striving with earnest prayer to bring down the power of God upon earth. Thus shall we hasten the time when all nations shall be gathered into the Church, and when the Church herself shall be pure and without spot: and thus, through the working of the Spirit in our hearts, shall we ourselves be gradually fitted for that Holy Communion of Saints and Angels, where all walk unintermittingly in all such good works as the will of God ordains and prepares for them.

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